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FRANK LESLIE'S

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THE MYSTIC THREE;

SHOWING WHAT HAPPENED TO THREE BOYS WHO BELIEVED ALL THEY READ.

By PIERCE CUTTING

CHAPTER LXVII.

A SWEETHEART'S STRATAGEM.

"AND now," observed Hackaliah Snick, when Brimstone's victim had vanished into the solitude of a thirty-foot deep well, "suppose somebody tells us what all this is about, anyway? Who was that chap?"

"Ralph Runnion," responded Mike.

"And who is Ralph Runnion?"

"A rascal that has the cheek to make love to Hattie, here."

"Before you go any further, I would like to make one remark," interrupted the young girl, who had been inspecting the Mystic Three with no little interest.

"What is that?"

"Don't you think it would be just as polite to introduce me to your friends?"

"That's so."

And Mike proceeded to perform that ceremony.

"This, gentlemen," he said, "is Miss Hattie Marshall."

The Mystic Three scraped and bobbed their heads.

"These gentlemen, Miss Marshall," he continued, "are the famous Mystic Three of Suckerville."

Hattie stared.

"Do they call them the Mystic Three because they look so funny?" she asked, innocently.

"They do not," replied Mike, gravely.

"Then why?"

"Because of the mysterious rites, cemented with blood, by which they have bound themselves to their purpose."

"And what is their purpose?"

"Death and destruction."

"Mercy on us!"

"Likewise gore and gold."

"Mike Morgan, are you crazy?"

"Hattie Marshall, I am not."

"Then what are you talking about?"

"About these gentlemen here."

"Well, as far as that is concerned," interrupted Simeon Walsingham Pugsley, who was beginning to feel sore at the peculiar way in which the Moonshiner performed the introduction, "I guess these gentlemen can get along without your talking about them."

"Is it possible?"

"At any rate, they can try to."

"But suppose I prefer talking about them?"

"Well, in that case you will have to take your chances."

"Chances on what?"

"On what you may get."

"And what will that be?"

"It may be something unpleasant."

"You don't mean to insinuate that anything unpleasant could happen to me through the medium of your royal selves?"

"Only wait and see."

"I should like to find out now."

"What's the use of talking to him, anyhow?" interrupted Hackaliah Snick. "The puppy isn't fit for decent people to kick, even."

Mike Morgan grew purple in the face at this.

"You call me a puppy?" he cried.

"Yes, I do. If it wasn't for us you'd be in jail."

"Or hung," added Gid.

"We left a decent man tied up on the mountain for your sake."

"And now you gibe us for thanks."

"Dog will be dog."

"You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear."

"Or a lion out of a jackass."

"Or an eagle out of a cowardly crow."

"So we might have expected this from the first."

"Oh! you might, might you?" repeated Mike, hoarse with passion.

"Yes, we might."

"Well, did you expect this, too?"

And Mike launched a fist at the speaker, who happened to be Gid Goble.

That worthy youth ducked, and butted him violently in the stomach.

Hattie Marshall, however, came to her sweetheart's rescue.

As Mike Morgan staggered back she snatched up a fence-rail, and with one vigorous blow laid the Devastator in the dust.

Then seizing Mike's arm, she cried in accents of consternation:

"For heaven's sake, Mike, do not remain here to quarrel! You must fly at once!"

"I must what?"

"Fly."

"Nonsense!"

"You must."

"Well I mustn't. Run away from those three lunatics? Not much!"

"Oh, no, no! It is not from them."

"From whom, then?"

"The others."

"What others?"

"Who are coming to arrest you."

"To arrest me?"

"Yes."

"And who are these mysterious enemies?"

"A party are on their way here now to arrest you on a charge of moonshining."

"Are you sure?"

"I am."

Moonshine Mike's face darkened, and the Devastators glanced at one another in undisguised triumph.

"WHEN THE MEN WERE SUFFICIENTLY CLOSE TO SEE HER, THE GIRL ROSE, AND WITH A WELL-ASSUMED START OF SURPRISE AND CONSTERNATION WHICH COULD NOT ESCAPE THEM, SET OUT AT A RUN. THE MEN SHOUTED, AND GAVE CHASE."

"INQUISITIVE CLINTON; Or, HE WANTED TO KNOW ALL ABOUT IT," WILL BEGIN IN OUR NEXT.

"By-the-by," he said, suddenly, "who told you all this?"

"Ralph Runnion. He came to taunt me with it."

"The scoundrel!" cried Mike, grinding his teeth. "Then it was he who gave me away."

And snatching a rusty scythe-blade from where it rested against the house, he turned in the direction in which Runnion had fled.

Hattie, however, stopped him again, and he threw the weapon aside.

"You are right," he said; "I must run for it. But how the deuce can I hope to give them the slip? Brimstone went lame last night, and is too stiff to travel fast. If they chase me they will run me down, sure."

"Do as I tell you," cried Hattie, "and you are safe. Come into the house."

And she led the way into an extensive, carpetless room, furnished with heavy pine tables, cowskin chairs, huge old-fashioned chests of drawers, a couple of benches, and a spinning-wheel.

Here she left him for a moment, vanishing through a doorway into another apartment.

Presently she reappeared with an old calico dress and a huge sun-bonnet.

"Put these on," she said, retiring into the side-room once more, "and throw me your clothes."

Mike complied without a word of remonstrance.

In a few minutes he was transformed from a stalwart young mountaineer into a strapping country girl.

In a similarly brief space of time Hattie appeared in the dress he had worn, in which she looked like a handsome but somewhat undersized boy.

The Mystic Three observed these transformations, too much astonished to make any comment on them.

"Now, then," Hattie said, forcing a basket filled with vegetables, eggs, and pats of butter wrapped in cabbage-leaves, into his hands, "you could never be taken for anybody but some mountain girl going to market. Be off as quick as that bad-tempered mule of yours will carry you."

"But you?"

"Never mind me. Nobody will hurt me."

"And these young men here?"

"They can take care of themselves, I guess."

"But they'll take care to give me away, too."

"I don't think so. Will you?"

Here was a chance for the Mystic Three to prove their magnanimity. They did it.

"He is safe from me," said Hack.

"And me," observed Sim.

"And me," added Gid.

"In fact," added all three, together, "he's entirely too low for us to bother about."

And with this shot for a parter they stalked away.

They turned into the road by which they had come, and pushed on in the direction indicated by a finger-board, which bore the inscription:

"Six miles to Rockville."

Mike Morgan, meanwhile, mounted, and was soon out of sight in the direction whence he came.

Hattie, after watching him until he disappeared, sat down with her eyes fixed on the lane leading from the road, and waited.

Her vigil was not a long one.

Within ten minutes a party of half a dozen mounted men appeared at the end of the lane, and rode rapidly toward her.

When they were sufficiently close to see her, the girl rose, and with a well-assumed start of surprise and consternation which could not escape them, set out at a run.

The men shouted, and gave chase.

The girl's ruse was a perfect success.

In order to follow her over the plowed fields and through the thickets, her pursuers were compelled to dismount.

So for fifteen minutes she held her own, leading them further and further in an opposite direction to that in which she knew her sweetheart was speeding toward liberty.

At last, panting and exhausted, she sank down at the foot of a tree, and allowed the men to come up with her.

"So we've got you at last, young fellow," said the foremost one, hoarse from his long run. "'Pon my soul you might have saved yourself and us some trouble by surrendering yourself at the start."

"Might I?" returned Hattie, looking into the speaker's face. "Well, I don't think so."

And she burst into a merry laugh.

The man shouted back with an oath of disappointment, crying:

"Duped, by thunder!"

"Duped!" exclaimed the others; "what do you mean?"

"Mean?" rejoined the other. "I mean that our boy's a girl. Only look!"

"A girl?"

"Yes."

"Nonsense!"

"Old Harry Marshall's girl, by the living Jingo!"

"So it is."

"Well, of all the games! Oh, boys, boys! we deserve to be horsewhipped."

And the speaker burst with a roar of good-natured laughter, while his companions traded off hard words.

"At any rate, my dear," said the portly man, gallantly offering Hattie his arm as they turned toward the house, "you can't do less than give us a drink after the wild-goose chase you've led us. I suppose that troublesome friend of yours keeps you pretty well supplied with Moonshine in a liquid as as well as in a conversational form."

Only too glad to detain them as long as possible, Hattie assented, and the party were soon forgetting their disappointment over a demijohn of Mike's best, in the kitchen of the farmhouse.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE RATTLESNAKES' DEN.

THE Mystic Three, meanwhile, had left the Marshall farm far behind them.

They were thoroughly disgusted with everything and everybody, including themselves.

Mike Morgan's ingratitude put them out of temper, and they were, after all, sorry that they had not got even with him, as they phrased it.

They had gone a couple of miles when, at a turn in the road, they suddenly found themselves confronted by ten young countrymen armed with cudgels and stones.

Among them was Ralph Runnion.

The truth flashed upon the Devastators at once.

The young miscreant had managed to escape from the well and gathered a party to waylay and mob his enemy.

That enemy, by taking flight in the contrary direction, had escaped them.

While they, having assisted him to escape, were destined to take his place in the hands of the Philistines. Their surmises proved correct to a hair.

Ralph Runnion no sooner laid his eyes upon them than he shouted:

"By Jingo! There they are!"

"Who?" demanded one of his followers.

"Those chaps that were with Mike Morgan."

"But where can Morgan be?"

"Never mind. Give it to them hot."

And they got it red hot, indeed.

Such a shower of stones as they had never even dreamed of rained down on the unfortunate Devastators.

Then the enemy advanced on them.

It would have been worse than folly to attempt resistance of such odds.

So the Mystic Three turned tail and scampered off at a speed that defied pursuit.

Ralph Runnion and his friends kept the chase up for a few hundred rods, but they might as well have attemped to capture a streak of greased lightning.

So finally, with a last volley of stones, they abandoned the race.

The Devastators continued flying, however, with a speed that would have done credit to an express train.

They rushed madly across the fields, bounding over fences and jumping over ditches as if they had been made of india-rubber, and soon found themselves climbing the mountain by a rugged road.

How long they would have kept up this headlong flight might have been a problem, had not one of the trio suddenly come to the conclusion that he had run about far enough.

That unlucky individual was the ancient mariner, the terror of the seas, Gideon Goble by name.

It was not until they had traveled about three miles in this manner that Gid felt it necessary to enter a protest.

Then he said:

"Foul my best bower, shipmates, if this ain't too much for me."

"What's too much for you?" demanded Sim, whose long legs had carried him over the ground with the utmost ease.

"Why, walking at about a nine knot an hour gait, that's all."

"Was the poor 'ittle pet tired?" asked Sim.

"Or did it want to go home to its muzzer?" inquired Hack.

"Look here, messmates, I don't want any baby-talk," said Gid, angrily.

"What do you want, then?"

"I want to come to anchor for a few minutes."

"You'll never come to anything unless you keep up your nerve better than this."

"Well, I ain't a walking machine."

"Nobody suspected you of being one, Mr. Goble."

"He's more like an eating-machine," remarked Hack.

"A regular grub-destroyer," added Sim.

"Thank goodness, I've got something to show for it, then," retorted Gid.

"What have you got to show for it?" demanded Sim.

"Why, this!"

And Gid complacently patted the protruding rotundity of that portion of his anatomy that did duty for his waist.

"You're proud of that corporation of yours, are you?" said Sim, with an air of disgust.

"Swamp my to'gallant fo'ks'le if I ain't."

"Well, there's no accounting for tastes."

"I'd like to know what you mean by that?"

"Would you?"

"Yes, I would."

"Then I'll tell you."

"Well, what do you mean?"

"I mean that I wouldn't be proud of having to hang out such a sign of gluttony."

"Oh, you wouldn't?"

"No, not to speak of the trouble of carrying it around."

"Don't it make you very tired?" inquired Sim, solicitously.

"If I was you I'd have it fixed so as I could carry it in a bag on my back when I wasn't using it," added Hack.

"Or in a wheelbarrow."

"Or send it ahead of me by express."

"Still, as he's generally engaged in stuffing it, that wouldn't give him much of a rest."

"Well, he might hire somebody to cram it for him, mightn't he?"

"That would be a costly job."

"Why so?"

"Because it would keep two able-bodied men busy filling that stomach, day in, day out."

This was too much even for the good nature of Gideon Goble.

He made a rush at his tormentors, who retreated against the trunk of a gigantic blasted tree.

As Gid sprang on them the ground seemed to open under their feet, and all three went tumbling down.

At the same time the air was filled with a hideous chorus of hisses and sharp rattles, like those produced by an army of enraged serpents.

Even as they fell the Devastators comprehended this, and when they touched the ground gave vent to a simultaneous howl of agony.

The shout was drowned in a chorus more violent and blood-curdling than before.

They had, indeed, tumbled into a den of rattlesnakes.

And before them, on his knees, and paralyzed with terror, was a grizzled negro.

CHAPTER LXIX.

THE HERMIT OF BALD MOUNTAIN.

LET us, for a brief space, return to that important character of this portion of our narrative, Whisky Jim.

At the first appearance of the revenue officers, as we know, Moonshine Mike's factotum had sought safety in flight.

Without losing a moment of valuable time, he had vanished into the gloomiest and darkest recesses of the forest he could find.

Which, as it was midnight and the forest dense, were, as may be imagined, gloomy ones enough in all faith.

In point of fact, the darkness could have been cut with a knife.

Charcoal would have made a light mark on it, and it was so dense that the fugitive found himself almost suffocating.

He was just congratulating himself on thus getting out of harm's way when a frightful thought obtruded itself upon him.

He had given the revenue officers the slip, but how about the ghosts?

There never was a Southern negro yet who did not place implicit faith in the supernatural, and Jim was not likely to go back on the traditions of his ancestors.

In fact, except cold water, there was no other object on or off the earth that he dreaded and despised more than a "spook," as he called it.

Consequently, when he found himself alone, buried in the midnight invisibility of the forest, environed by those strange, mysterious noises that are only heard at such a time and place, a dismal horror settled on his heart.

"Bress and praise de Lord," he muttered, as he staggered on. "Save me dis once an' I'll never do so no mo'. De precious Hebbens hab mercy on me. What's dat?"

And he fell on his knees before a huge lightning-blasted oak that loomed up in the middle of a little opening, looking very ghostly, indeed, as the moonlight touched it with an occasional gleam.

As he did so a screech-owl in the brush uttered its dismal call.

This was all that was needed to complete the old negro's dismay. He threw himself face downward on the earth with a shriek of despair.

"It's de debbil! It's de debbil!" he screamed. "De Lord hab mussy on me! Ole Harry hab done come for my soul!"

"Don't you be afraid," called a sharp, sneering voice, apparently proceeding from the heart of the blasted tree. "He ain't goin' to take any such trouble, for he knows it will come to him of its own accord soon enough."

Whisky Jim grew stiff with horror at these words.

Every single kinky-hair on his head straightened out and stuck up like wire.

"Oh, Lord," he cried, "Jim's done gone."

"You're gone out of your senses, you cowardly old scoundrel," said the voice. "What are you afraid of, anyhow?"

"What is I afraid ob?" repeated Jim.

"Yes."

"Why, you."

"You don't think I'm going to eat you, do you?"

"I dunno, I'm sure."

"Well, you needn't be afraid; I'd have to be hungrier than I ever have been yet to make a meal of you. Get up!"

And the prostrate son of Ham received a half dozen kicks that caused him to spring to his feet like an electric jumping-jack.

As he did so his assailant dealt him such a tap on the crown of his head that would have cracked any ordinary skull.

Then poking him in the ribs with the staff which he had used for the assault on his skull, he said:

"Straighten up, you old vagabond. Let a man have a square look at you."

Whisky Jim opened his eyes.

Before him stood a man of commanding stature, with white hair and a beard of the same color, which reached to his waist.

The face of this individual, which was darkened and roughened by exposure, was clear cut and intelligent, and his eyes sparkled under the bushy white eyebrows like diamonds.

His body was covered with a long coat of deerskin, reaching almost to his heels, and bordered with a broad band of foxskin.

His breeches, leggins, and moccasins were of the same material, while a cap made of an eagle's breast-feathers, drawn over a tight skull-cap of skin, covered his head.

In his hand this singular personage carried a long ash staff with a forked end, such as Jim himself had often used in capturing rattlesnakes in the mountains.

"De saints sabe me!" gasped the negro, as his eyes comprehended what it rested on. "Holy Jerusalem and all de blessed saints! It's de sperit ob de mountain!"

"The spirit of the mountain, you fool," said the other. "What do you mean?"

"Oh, sabe me!" wailed Jim. "Good massa ob de spooks! hab mercy on me!"

"Have mercy on you? I'm not going to hurt you."

"You only says dat, sah, to flatter me, I know. Oh, spare me, spare me, good sperit!"

"Duce take me!" cried the stranger. "I'll be hanged if this old idiot don't take me for a ghost!"

"An' isn't you a spook, sah?" gasped Jim, eagerly. "Isn't you a gose, for suah?"

For answer, the ghost raised one of his fists and dealt the questioner a blow between the eyes that knocked him against the blasted tree, a dozen feet away.

"Does that feel very much like a ghost's hand?" he asked.

"Foh thunder, no, massa," returned Jim, rubbing his aching head, sorrowfully. "It feels mo' like a sledge-hammer making hoss-shoes. I don't believe Brimstone could kick harder."

"Who is Brimstone?"

"He is a mule, sah. De wuss mule out ob de boneyard. He belongs to Massa Mike."

"He's got a nice name."

"An' he am a nice mule foh to be out ob de reach ob."

"Well, we're out of reach of him now, so you'll have to try to make my fists answer. But it's no use our shivering out here when we have a hole to creep to."

"Dat's so, sah."

"Then follow me."

And he led Jim behind the blasted oak.

Then, putting up a sort of trap-door made of interlaced branches, a black opening among the gnarled and intertwined roots was visible.

Creeping through this aperture, the stranger signaled to Jim to follow him.

The latter, obeying, found himself in quite a roomy den, surrounded by the twisted roots, which served for walls, and with a floor beaten smooth and covered with dried grass and aromatic leaves.

In one corner was a demijohn, a box, apparently containing provisions, and a heap of blankets and undressed deerskins.

These things the negro observed with amazement, not unmixed with terror, by the light of a blazing pine-knot which was planted in the middle of the place.

The thick, black smoke found its way up the hollow trunk of the tree, which was a mere shell, and out of an opening among the withered branches above.

Tossing his guest a blanket, the tenant of this weird retreat motioned him to sit down.

Then filling a tin-cup from the demijohn which contained, unmistakaby, Jim's favorite beverage, he handed it to him.

"Drink," he said.

And throwing himself at full length on the floor, and filling a pipe with a long stem and a brass bowl with some strange lumpish substance, which he took from a silver box, he began to smoke.

Jim needed no second invitation, and drained his cup to the dregs.

"Now," continued the stranger, "rest yourself and tell me what is going on in the world."

"Tell you what, sah?" repeated Jim.

"Everything. Talk till you talk me to sleep."

"Sakes ob mussy!" murmured the negro; "he'm a loonatick, for shuah."

But on that very account he dared not refuse to comply with his strange entertainer's demand.

Stretched luxuriously on his couch of leaves and grass, the old man filled the place with a peculiarly heavy, aromatic smoke from his pipe, while the negro rattled along, talking like the clatter of a mill-wheel.

The effect of this performance on the stranger was peculiar in the extreme.

He listened intently, occasionally only muttering a word of comment under his breath, but he made no remark.

Little by little he seemed to become insensible to what was going on, only puffing at his pipe, whose smoke began to make the negro sleepy and dizzy.

When he finished, the stranger was silent.

In point of fact, the denizen of the mountain seemed plunged in a species of ecstatic stupor.

His pipe had fallen to the ground, and he reclined on his rude couch, staring straight before him, with wide-open eyes and a rigid face, devoid of any expression save that of perfect repose.

He was so silent and motionless that Jim at last became alarmed.

"Foh God! Mebbe him dead," he muttered, anxiously. "Dis am a gay ole fix for a specktable nigger to be in. What de debble am I gwine to do now?"

He had risen when he spoke, and was about to approach the hermit and attempt to rouse him, when a sharp hiss cut the air.

Whisky Jim stopped short with an exclamation of alarm.

The hiss was repeated, and then taken up and echoed on all sides with the accompaniment of a sharp, angry rattle, which there was no mistaking.

It was the threatening note of an aroused rattlesnake.

With a yell of terror, the old man fell on his knees.

At the same time the noise of feet tramping the bush overhead became audible.

Then with a crash the trap gave way, and three figures came rolling down beside him.

CHAPTER LXX.

A RATTLESNAKE CONCERT.

FOR a minute after the fall of the Mystic Three the demoniac rattling ceased.

By the time they gathered themselves together and sat up it commenced again.

The reptiles which produced the noises were, however, as yet invisible.

The sounds environed them on all sides, but there was no vestige of a snake to be seen.

This, combined with his ignorance of the reptiles, emboldened Simeon Walsingham Pugsley to rise.

"Are you fellows going to squat there all night?" he demanded. "From the way you act, a man might think you were scared."

"Well, I don't mind acknowledging that I am," returned Gideon Goble.

"You are, eh?"

"I am."

"And how is it with you, Mr. Snick?"

"Well, I'm a little embarrassed."

"That's a new name for it."

"It doesn't matter what sort of a name it is, I fancy."

"And why not?"

"Because a snake by any other name would be just as tough a customer to tackle."

"But there are no snakes here."

"What do you call that noise, then?"

"I don't know. But I'm going to wake that old effigy there and find out."

And he approached the hermit.

It seemed as if the invisible reptiles kept special watch over the strange mountaineer.

For as soon as Sim extended his hand to touch him, such a storm of voices broke forth as fairly deafened them.

The uproar was so violent that it aroused even the hermit, sodden as he was with the fumes of the opium he had smoked.

With a sudden start he awoke.

Then, springing to his feet, he glared wildly about him, as all men do when unexpectedly awakened from profound repose.

The serpentine noises around seemed to recall him to himself.

"What's this?" he cried.

"That's what we want to know," responded Sim, trembling.

"You! And how came you here?"

"We sort of stumbled in."

"And roused the serpents!"

"They were tolerably lively when we got here. But are they real snakes?"

"Real snakes! If you had touched me you would have found, to your sorrow."

"You mean to say they guard you, then?"

"I only mean to say that if you value your lives you'd better be gone while you have time."

"A nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse."

And the Devastators made a rush for the opening.

When about to scramble up, however, they started back with cries of dismay.

And well they might.

From between the interlaced roots of the tree protruded countless flat, venomous heads, with broad, bulging jaws and gleaming fangs.

Numberless eyes sparkled in the light of the pine-knot, like those of fiends, and forked tongues quivered like little jets of flame.

They were the heads of a legion of serpents, and serpents of a class which all hands recognized with a thrill of nameless horror.

They were rattlesnakes!

"Too late, too late!" cried the hermit, in a voice that was almost drowned by the hisses and rattles of the dread reptiles. "This way. For your lives, this way, quick!"

The Mystic Three, now more dead than alive, crouched close to his side, dragging Whisky Jim with them.

Snatching a long rope of horse-hair from the box, he coiled it in a circle on the ground around them.

"Remain within this ring," he said, "and you are safe. They will not cross that lariat."

"Then it won't be me that will go to meet them," gasped Sim.

"Nor I won't make any call, not if I starve here," added Gid.

As for Hackaliah Snick and Whisky Jim, they were too scared even to gasp.

They simply held their posts, paralyzed into statues.

The hermit made no reply to any of the observations offered.

Reaching into the box again, he took from it a musical instrument, somewhat resembling a flageolet in shape, but with finger-valves like a fife, instead of keys. The noise of the snakes had now become as hideous as it was terrifying.

Suddenly one monster, at least twelve feet long, glided out into the open space in front of the hermit and his horror-stricken guests.

"Mussy on us," groaned Whisky Jim. "Dat am de grandfader ob all de rattlesnakes. He done lose all ob his rattles."

In fact, the enormous reptile was without rattles, a sign of extreme old age.

These venerable serpents are the most dangerous of their species.

A particle of their venom as large only as a pin's point is sufficient to destroy a bullock.

Following this patriarch a swarm of younger and smaller snakes came wriggling out of their coverts.

They followed one another till over a hundred of different sizes, from three to ten feet in length, surrounded the group within the circle of horsehair.

They made no attempt, however, to pass that barrier, a fact which the shivering negro regarded as magical.

There was nothing supernatural about it, however.

Snakes are never known to cross a horsehair rope.

The hunters and herdsmen of our western plains, when they are compelled to camp in serpent-infested districts, arrange their lariats around them in a circle, and sleep within the charmed ring quite as safely as they would in bed.

As soon as the snakes commenced to gather about him, the hermit applied his flageolet, or whatever it may called, to his lips, and blew a soft, musical note.

At the first sound of this the squirming monsters became motionless.

They appeared to be intently watching the player.

The hermit then began to evoke from his instrument what might be called a continuous melody.

It was a monotonous, soft, and not unpleasing sound—a series of notes, in fact, not unlike the crooning chant of a mother soothing her refractory child to sleep.

The old snake now partially coiled himself up, and the others followed his example.

Then, as the melody continued, the patriarch began springing up and down.

At one time he would be flat on the ground. At another, seemingly, he stood on the end of his tail, and hissed incessantly.

This seemed to be a signal for the rest.

They poured out from their lairs in a perfect swarm.

First one and then another began, and then another followed suit.

So at last it was a grand chorus of hisses and an unbroken circle of leaping serpents, forming a scene whose diabolical yet curious character no words can describe.

It was such a scene as one might expect to meet in the Inferno.

The intruders were now actually petrified with terror.

But at the same time there was a species of fascination about the sight, too.

The hermit, meanwhile, squatting on the ground between them, blew steadily on his flageolet without the least indication of uneasiness.

In fact, he seemed lost to all that was going on around him, performing his task as one might imagine a somnambulist doing it.

Suddenly the air changed.

From monotonous and sad, it became gay, rapid and varied.

The effect on the snakes was electrical.

The big fellow ceased his strange bounds in the air at once.

Coiling himself again, he began waving his tail to and fro.

All the others at once fell into the same position, and commenced rattling furiously.

This produced a chorus of rattlings, like the clashing of icy tree-branches in a Winter wind.

The sharp, piercing noise of the rattles mingled with the tempest of hisses until the confused sounds became absolutely deafening.

The music, too, increased in rapidity and shrillness until the serpents, as if sympathetically affected by the wild and piercing notes, began to wriggle and squirm themselves into knots and tangles until all became one writhing mass.

Then the hermit suddenly ceased playing.

In two minutes more not a snake was to be seen.

The tangled knot had untangled itself, and they had slipped into their holes without a sound.

Stupefied with amazement and nervous excitement, the spectators of this strange scene sat silent, staring at one another with dazed eyes.

The hermit, as he finished, sank back, apparently exhausted.

Only for a minute, however.

Then he recovered himself, and wiping the perspiration from his forehead, said:

"Now, then, you are safe."

"There's only one thing will make me sure of that," observed Gideon Goble, "and that's my getting outside of this."

"You need have no fear; the serpents are now exhausted, and will do you no harm."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"But of all things, beware of one."

"What?"

"Never enter here, save in my company."

"I wouldn't enter here in your company again even for a house and lot."

The hermit smiled grimly.

"Perhaps you had best not. If I had not awakened when I did, you would all be dead now."

"I don't know as I'm more than half alive as it is."

"Is there enough life left in you to climb out of that hole?"

"You bet."

"Then climb."

The Mystic Three waited for no second adjuration.

With Whisky Jim bringing up the rear, they were in the open air in a twinkling.

Then, by one common impulse, they hurried from the spot.

The negro was about to plunge into the woods, when Hack halted him and demanded the way to the nearest town.

That place they learned was called Rockville.

It was a railway-station, and lay on the very road they were pursuing.

So, discussing their extraordinary adventures as they went, they "made *sail*."

CHAPTER LXXI.

UNDER WAY AGAIN.

WHEN the Mystic Three resumed their journey it was in a sadly discouraged and demoralized condition.

They had begun to discover that a life of adventure, although doubtless, very exciting, had its drawbacks. And among other things, that regular meals at regular hours was a very necessary part of existence.

Provided they were to have any comfort in living.

As it was, all three were in a very despondent mood.

Simeon Walsingham Pugsley felt lame and tired.

Hackaliah Snick declared that he was one grand universal ache from his head to his heels.

And Gideon Goble was, in his own expressive language, hollow and hungry.

But there was nothing uncommon in that, of course.

That condition was chronic with him.

For some time they trudged along in silence, the only sound heard being when one of the trio, by way of varying the monotony, gave vent to a dismal groan or a heart-rending sigh.

Sim, who was leading, finally pulled up as they reached the crest of a hill and brought his rifle down with a thud that suggested the prevalence of a first-class earthquake.

"I say, fellows," he began, in a tone of deep determination, "this sort of thing won't do at all."

"What won't do?" demanded Hack.

"Why, being banged about in this way, from pillar to post."

"And going without anything to eat," added Gid, with a sigh that seemed to come from the depths of his soul.

"Besides having no sleep," continued Sim.

"And never getting anywhere," said Gid.

"What's the matter with you two?" inquired Hack. "Are you going to weaken now?"

"I couldn't be much weaker than I am," replied Sim, dolefully.

"And I haven't got the strength of a starved woodchuck," remarked Gid.

"Well, I never thought you would chuck it up so easy," responded Hackaliah.

His two companions looked at one another, and then at him, with an air of the profoundest pity.

"Poor fellow," said Sim, soothingly; "I never dreamed it would come to this."

"Come to what?" demanded Hack.

"It's affected his brain," Sim went on, without heeding this interruption.

"He's gone entirely," said Gid, tapping his forehead, significantly.

"Clean cracked."

"Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown, as Shakespeare, or some other ancient duffer, remarked."

"It's too bad."

"Dreadful."

"Terrible."

"Frightful."

"How can we ever break the sad news to his unhappy parents?"

"It'll break their hearts."

"And they'll break his neck."

"We'll have to send him home at once," continued Sim.

"By the first train."

"As freight."

"Slightly damaged."

To be delivered in the same order as received."

And the two Devastators shook hands gravely.

"Whenever you two lunatics get through swapping your idiotic remarks, I would like to say something," exclaimed Hack, as soon as they gave him an opportunity to get a word in edgeways.

"And that is?"

"Say it, by all means, but be careful not to strain your poor head," responded Sim.

"Or exhaust your brain," added Gid.

"It's more likely to exhaust me if I listen to any more of your dumb, foolish conversation," said Hack.

"Then don't listen to it."

"I don't intend to."

"Well, what are you going to do, then?"

"I'm going to express an opinion."

"Which is?"

"That you are the most charming, best-matched pair of up and down, out and out, double and twist, natural-born fools I ever saw, or heard of, or dreamed of—that's all."

"You think so, do you, Mr. Snick?"

"I most undoubtedly do."

"Perhaps you wouldn't mind telling us why?"

"Perhaps I wouldn't."

"Tell us, then."

"Because you stand talking about nothing for a good ten minutes at a time," responded Hack, disgustedly.

"You call it nothing, do you?" inquired Sim.

"What else is it?"

"We consider it common sense."

"How do you make that out?"

"Well, when a fellow is such a fix as you are can't find anything better to do than get off dizzy puns, it's a pretty sure sign he's gone wrong in the upper story," replied Sim.

"Got softening of the brain, in fact," added Gid.

"And is that what's ailing you two crankies?" demanded Hackaliah.

"That's just the size of it."

"Then I'll try and spare your delicate sensibilities in future."

"You'd better, unless you want to send us to an untimely grave," said Sim.

"Or drive us to raving madness," continued Gid, solemnly.

"I have said that I will spare you," replied Hack.

"Kind fortune be praised!" exclaimed Sim and Gid, simultaneously.

And they again shook hands, as if their minds were relieved of a dreadful burden.

"Now, then," said Sim, "if that point's settled this expedition might as well proceed to business."

"Where shall we proceed to it?" inquired Hack.

"Right here."

"And in what way?"

"We must decide what to do next."

"I should think we had best put for Rockville as fast as we can peg along, it'll be dark in an hour."

"And get some grub," remarked Gid.

"Keep your little stomach easy, Mr. Goble, and we'll endeavor to cram it for you as soon as we get there," replied Sim.

"Then the word is Forward," said Hack.

And forward the Devastators went, at as rapid a rate as their bruised and stiffened limbs would permit.

It had grown quite dark, when, in rounding a bend in the road, the village and railway station of Rockville came into view.

The Mystic Three uttered a cry of joy.

And made tracks in the direction of the tracks that were already made.

Those, in fact, of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad.

As they neared the depot they saw a long freight-train drawn up on a side-track.

Freight was being rapidly loaded and unloaded, while the shrill hissing of escaping steam gave warning that the train was soon to start. At the rear of the train a large caboose-car was attached.

Near it, at the side of the track, a small fire had been kindled, and its ruddy light was reflected upon the faces of about a dozen rough-looking men, who stood about it.

They were gaunt, stalwart fellows, clad in heavy blanket coats, thick corduroy pants, or blue jean overalls, and wore huge boots of untanned cowhide, reaching to the thigh.

Their long hair and shaggy, untrimmed beards gave them a wild and savage appearance in the weird light of the fire.

Pistol-butts and the hafts of huge knives peeped from convenient pockets, or gleamed above their belts.

The Mystic Three came to a sudden halt as they abruptly confronted the strangers, whose savage aspect filled them with dismay.

Their first thought was that they had fallen into the hands of a gang of desperadoes.

And their first impulse was to turn and fly.

It was too late, however.

Before they could make a motion one of the strangers—a perfect giant in size, with a thickly matted beard reaching nearly to his waist—strode forward and seized Simeon Walsingham Pugsley by the collar.

"Howlin' coyotes, pards, choke me with a lariat if old man Noah's ark ain't broke loose, for sure!"

And he raised the trembling scalp-hunter, and held him aloft to view, while his comrades burst into a wild shout of laughter.

And Hackaliah Snick and Gideon Goble groveled on the ground and howled for mercy.

CHAPTER LXXII.

AMONG THE BULL-WHACKERS.

TO say that the Davastators were terrified would be to state a fact very mildly.

They were fairly paralyzed.

Gid's teeth chattered like those of a monkey with the ague.

And Hackaliah doubled himself up into the smallest possible compass, and wished—oh, how he wished!—that he could find some very small hole, to creep into.

Even a rathole.

As for Simeon Walsingham Pugsley, he was incapable of speech for at least three minutes.

Then he gurgled forth:

"Let me down, for goodness sake, Mr. Murderer; I'm being st-r-r-an-g-l-ed!"

And he gasped and spluttered like a fish out of water.

His captor burst into a huge horse-laugh that certainly attested the possession of sound lungs, and then deposited Sim on the ground.

Whereupon that worthy youth immediately collapsed into a limp heap at the man's feet.

"What in thunder are you, anyway?" demanded the burly cattle-drover, for such he was.

Sim managed to find his voice, and replied:

"We're the Devastators, sir; but please don't destroy us. We're perfectly harmless."

"Haw, haw, haw," roared the drover, slapping his sides with his brawny hands. "Wal, brand my bullocks if you don't look like it."

"We are, kind Mr. Desperado, we are. We wouldn't hurt a sick kitten."

"Whar did you get the name of the Devastators, then?"

"Skin my brindle steer," broke in another of the drovers, "ef it don't 'pear to me that they've devastated all the scarecrows in the country."

"I allow they're the queerest outfit this yer side of the Rockies," said a third.

"Come, my young tarantulas, sit up and give us your pedigree," continued the first speaker. "We ain't a-goin' to eat you."

"Eat 'em!" broke in another of the men. "Wal, by the great chimney rock, I kudn't stomach one of them greenies nohow—not if I war lost on a sage perairie, an' four hundred miles from nowhar."

"They'd be meaner fodder than sand-rats."

"Yes, or turkey-buzzard."

"I'd rather tackle a pizened kyote."

"Shut up, you talking jackasses, will you?" exclaimed the big drover, who seemed to be a sort of leader among his fellows. "You, Jim Blathers, h'ist 'em up onto this yere log, whar we can take a good squint at their phiziogs."

Mr. Blathers obeyed.

Seizing Gid with one hand and Hack with the other, he deposited them side by side on a huge stick of timber which some of the drovers had been using for a seat, and completed his labors by setting Sim down beside them with what that young man thought very unnecessary hardness.

"Now, then, quit palaverin', all on you," said the boss drover; "I'll do the talkin' this hitch."

The other men gathered round in silence.

"Here, you," began the drover, addressing Sim, "what's your name?"

"Simeon Walsingham Pugsley."

"Simeon what?"

"Walsingham Pugsley."

"Wal, I hope I may be biled in the Hot Springs if that ain't a hooper; but it kind o' fits you, scalp me if it don't; you look jist like that, somehow."

Sim's bosom swelled with conscious pride, and he felt enough encouraged to venture a query.

"Why do I look like it?" he asked.

"'Cause you 'pear to be just the sort of stupid fool to have such a name as that."

Gid and Hack grinned approvingly, while Mr. Pugsley scowled ferociously.

"An' what mout they call you?" inquired the drover, turning to Hack.

"They might call me George Washington Aminadab Epenebus Christopher Columbus Eliakim Michael Angelo Smith."

"They mout?"

"Yes, but they don't."

"Look-a here, you wingless insect," exclaimed the drover, angrily, "don't you give me none o' your talk, or I'll warm you with a lariat quicker 'n a hoop-snake can roll down-hill. What's your name?"

Hack didn't know what a hoop-snake was, and had never seen a snake of any variety roll down hill, but he had sense enough to answer correctly this time.

"Hackaliah Snick."

"That's another nice one, and no mistake. What's yours?" he added, addressing Gid.

"Gideon Goble."

"Wal, I'll be blest if that don't beat Kimanch. Whar'd you come from?"

"From way down East."

"The folks to home must miss you pretty durned bad, I shud think."

"We're afraid they do," responded Sim, as a vivid recollection of the reception that awaited them in Suckerville arose in his mind.

"They're just a-pining for us," said Hack.

"Hankering for us day and night," added Gid.

"I reckon they must be," rejoined the drover. "Wal, what are you doin' out in this yere kentry?"

"We're going West."

"What fur?"

"To see the country and seek adventures."

"And what kind of adventures mout you be seekin'?"

"Oh, most any kind that turns up," replied Sim.

"Indians, grizzly bears, road-agents, or anything," added Hack.

"Wal, I'll be bucked by a clay-bank mustang if you don't beat me," said the drover.

"That's just our style," replied Sim, who was gradually regaining his confidence. "We generally beat everybody that tackles us."

"You do, hay?"

"Yes, siree. We're thoroughbreds, we are."

"How would you like to hire out with me?" demanded the drover.

"To do what?"

"Whack bulls."

"Whack what?"

"Whack which?"

"Whack who?"

The three Devastators uttered these several queries in a breath.

"I said to whack bulls," continued the drover. "Don't you know nothin' at all?"

"And what in creation is that?"

"Why, to drive cattle, in course."

"Are you a cattle-drover?"

"I are."

"And you want to hire us?"

"I want three likely young fellows to help me, and I dunno but what you'd suit as well as any I'm apt to git."

"And what's the pay?" demanded Sim, with a business-like air.

"Wal, bein' as you're green at the biz. an' have got to be broke in, which are a thunderin' tough job, I'll say fifteen dollars a month apiece, and your grub, in course."

"Fifteen dollars a-month?"

"And all we can eat?"

"Yes, and I find your hosses and outfit. How does that seem to strike you?"

"It hits me right where I live," replied Sim.

"And me," cried Gid.

"Count me in, too, on that racket," added Hack.

"Then you accept?"

"We do, rather," responded Sim.

"I'll whack anything, from a bull to a rhinoceros, on those terms," said Hack.

"I'm a bull-whacker from this minute!" exclaimed Gid.

"Then it are a bargain. Here, you, Jim Blathers, git these young fellers some supper; we'll be startin' in a few minutes."

Mr. Blathers speedily produced some fried bacon and a plentiful supply of bread-and-cheese.

On which dainties the Mystic Three gorged themselves, like so many anacondas.

They had scarcely finished when the engine-whistle tooted sharply, and their new employer shouted:

"Jump in lively, boys, she's goin' to hump herself in a minute. In with you, and stow yourselves away the best you can."

Accordingly the three amateur bull-whackers climbed into the caboose, where most of the drovers had already preceded them, and in another minute were once more under way for the wild West.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

GID GOBLE GOES CRAZY.

WHEN the train was fairly under way the drovers settled themselves into position to smoke and talk at their ease.

It was then that one of them, who seemed to remark Gid Goble's nautical garb for the first time, said:

"Well, gore me blind! You don't mean to say you're a real sailor?"

"Maybe I do, though," replied Gid, who was decidedly unwilling to admit that he was only a counterfeit.

"What are you doing out here, then?"

"Laying around."

"I should think you'd lay around where there was ships, then?"

"Well, as far as that goes, there's ships out here, ain't there?"

"Not as I ever heard on."

"Don't you ship cattle?"

The man scratched his head.

The joke was evidently too deep for him, so Gid tried an easier one.

"And haven't you got prairie schooners on the plains?"

"Wot's he up to now?" demanded the drover, turning on his companions.

Gid Goble was disgusted.

"At any rate," he said, "you call this car a caboose, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, they have cabooses aboard ship, so that settles it."

The drovers stared at one another, dumb with amazement.

Then each silently tapped his forehead, as much as to say:

"Poor fellow! he's off his nut, sure."

As for Simeon Walsingham Pugsley and Hackaliah Snick, they fairly roared.

The discomfited Gid turned purple with wrath, and as he dared not say anything to the men, he pitched into his companions.

"I'd like to know what you're guffawing at?" he said.

"Would you?" asked Sim.

"Yes, I would."

"Then come here and I'll tell you."

Gid advanced until he stood close to a broken bit of looking-glass, which some one had tacked to the wall of the caboose.

Pointing to it Sim said:

"Look there."

Gid obeyed, and very naturally saw himself reflected.

"Well, what now?" he demanded.

"You ain't blind, are you?"

"No."

"Then you see it."

"See what?"

"What we were laughing at."

"Is it me you mean?"

"That lovely effigy don't look like anybody else's, does it?"

"If yours looks half as lovely when you see it again, it won't be my fault."

And before Sim knew what was going to happen, he received a blow in the eye that knocked him down.

Hack Snick leaped forward just in time to stop Gid's fist with his nose. Before he could strike back the drovers interfered.

They really believed that Gid was not right in his head, and that his comrades were imposing on him.

"Let up on him now?" said one.

"You ought to be ashamed to bully a poor softy so," observed another.

"Even an Injun wouldn't harm him," remarked a third.

"Yes, the werry salwages is kind to idiots," added a fourth.

"And Lord knows he's one," interpolated Gid's late interlocutor.

"Clean gone."

"Empty under the roof."

"A mere wreck in the upper story."

"Why, he can't talk plain English."

"Reg'lar flighty, sure enough."

"And he ain't a bad-lookin' boy, nuther."

"Some of 'em ain't, you know. Their brains runs to fat, like."

"Not havin' any thinkin' to do, they makes up by eatin'."

As these remarks ran round the caboose, Gideon Goble sank on a bench, petrified by wrath and mortification.

To have his puns laughed at was bad enough, but to be taken for an idiot was simply frightful.

"Pore feller!" remarked one of the men, again. "He looks sort of wild-like."

"I guess he's all right now, though," said Sim, suffocated with laughter.

"Does he have them spells often?"

"Every day."

"Where did you get hold of him?"

"Found him."

"Where?"

"In a field," answered Sim, with suppressed laughter.

"On top of a fence," added Hack.

"Standing on his head," put in Sim.

"And eating raw turnips," finished Hack.

The drovers grunted angrily.

"No skylarkin', now," said one. "Give it to us straight."

"We are giving it to you as straight as a string."

"And do you mean to say he was standin' on his head on a fence eating raw turnips?"

"Yes; but the fence was a stone one, you know."

"Oh!"

"And the turnips was small."

"Ah!"

"But how did he get 'em down I want to know?" persisted one skeptic.

"Shur', Dave Reilly," interrupted one of his companions, "ain't you got no head? Them loonies is as cunnin' as pizen sarpints."

"That's so; I never thought of that."

There was a buzz of comment over this extraordinary story, which gave the two Devastators time to think of new romances.

So they came to time on the next interrogation, loaded to the muzzle again.

"Whar' did he belong?" asked one of their companions.

"That's just what we can't find out."

"Why?"

"Well, you see, he tells so many different yarns. Once he says he belongs down in Connecticut."

"Yes."

"Another time he blows about being a pirate."

"A what?"

"A pirate."

"Well, I'm blamed! That 'counts for his queer rig, eh?"

"Just so."

"But whar had he come from when you seen him?"

"From an asylum."

"A lunatic asylum?"

"Just so."

"And he had 'scaped?"

"Cut a keeper's throat and run for it."

"Holy smoke!"

"And set the asylum on fire, and burned all the other lunatics up. It was all in the papers."

"But what in blazes did you fetch him along for?"

"Well, we didn't find out how bad he was till it was too late."

"How'd you find it out?"

"By his trying to cut my tongue out one night while I was asleep."

"And you've kept him along with you ever since."

"Well, we didn't like to shake him, you know."

"I would, quicker than wink."

"And so would I."

"And I."

"Me, too."

"Same here."

"Write me down one."

"But we hadn't the heart to do it," observed Hack. "The poor wretch would starve to death without us."

"Or kill somebody and get hung," added Sim.

"By Jinks! there's a heap of good in them young chaps, after all," said one drover.

"That there is," remarked another.

"Shake, boy," added a third.

And he gripped Sim's hand with a vigor that made him wince.

Another performed that same operation for Hack.

And when the first two got through the rest literally took a hand.

By the time they had finished the two Devastators might as well have had no right hands at all for all the good they were to them.

However, they were not displeased.

They had gained the good will of the drovers and were worrying Gid.

Worrying was no name for it.

He had listened to the lies being told about him in complete stupefaction.

So dazed was he indeed by the audacity and success of his malicious comrades that he really looked like what they asserted him to be. That is to say, a perfect idiot.

The cattle men observed this, and to them it was a complete attestation of the truth of what they had heard about him.

They really believed him a murderous lunatic, whom it was dangerous to have around.

So after a consultation among themselves, one said to Sim and Hack: "Look here, boys."

"We're looking."

"You mayn't be afeard to trust yourselves with that chap."

"We ain't."

"But, dog gone it, we are."

"Do tell!"

"Or, rayther, we'd rayther have his room than his company."

At these words a cold chill struck home to Gid Goble's heart.

He already saw himself, with his mind's eye, thrown from the train in the darkness.

So, with a cry of despair, he threw himself at the drover's feet, screaming: "Mercy! mercy!"

(To be continued.)

"The Mystic Three" was commenced in No. 677.

EXTRAORDINARY NERVE OF A MINER WHO, AFTER BEING TERRIBLY WOUNDED, CRAWLED TO A FUSE AND EXTINGUISHED IT JUST IN TIME TO AVOID BEING BLOWN UP.

A MINER'S NERVE.

REMARKABLE presence of mind was recently shown by a miner, near Pottsville, Pa. He was employed on a shaft on Sharp Mountain. He had lighted a fuse, and was climbing to the surface by means of pegs in the side of the shaft. When within a few feet of the top one of the pegs gave way, and the unfortunate man fell to the bottom, thirty feet below.

One of his thighs was broken, and the splintered bones were pushed through two pairs of pantaloons.

Notwithstanding his terrible injuries, he had sufficient presence of mind to crawl to the lighted fuse, which had burned within a few inches of the charge, and to smother it. If he had not done this he would have been blown to pieces when the explosion took place. He then crawled back to one of the earth buckets, got into it without assistance, and was hoisted to the surface.

Our young friends should always bear in mind that the best way to get clear of any danger is to keep cool.

SAGACITY OF A PONY.

A REMARKABLE pony, which some short time since might have been seen daily grazing on the Cirencester College cricket-grounds, England, was a most sagacious animal, known by the name of Grimm. His history is as follows:

Grimm was born and bred on the estate of Mr. Mussel, of Aden, near Aberdeen, Scotland, and sold by him, in 1852, to a gentleman who required a pony to carry his wife during his walking expeditions in Perthshire, with this caution, "Never drive him, or he will break your neck," as he had been notorious for previous bad conduct, and had previously smashed a pony-carriage.

In the stable and in the field he was gentleness itself, but was found to be very headstrong and conceited—if one may attribute such a quality to a pony—and the few misfortunes that befell him during the thirty-four years of his life his kind and indulgent owners attributed to this defect in his character.

During Grimm's walking expeditions he must have played his mistress some very odd tricks, which she truly states must have cost thought and preparation, for he apparently always made his own arrangements for the day.

One hot afternoon his mistress wished to ride some four miles to meet her husband, who was returning from Edinburgh. Until they arrived at a certain hill, Grimm was in all respects a model pony, when suddenly at this point he stopped, having decided that so far he would go, and no further.

All his mistress's endeavors to make him descend the hill were fruitless. At last, tired out with his rearing and jumping, she unadvisedly did what he had long intended she should do—dismounted and dragged him down the hill by the bridle, and then, hoping she had won the day, she put her foot into the stirrup to spring into the saddle; but he had been waiting for that moment, and, before she could accomplish her purpose, found herself flat on the road, and on looking round saw Grimm merrily galloping home.

His memory for places and people is described as extraordinary, and on one certain day, and that only, would he take his mistress in turn to each shop she was in the habit of visiting.

He learnt to open any kind of door, and would turn handles and keys, also lift latches, so that, unless care was taken to lock him into his stable from the outside, he was certain to walk out again when the coast was clear.

Having a large stable-yard, in which he walked about in perfect freedom, his amusement was to open the door of the scullery and steal the greens the cook was washing for dinner. She, being quite deaf, was unconscious of his presence until she felt his warm nose on her shoulder and her saw cabbage whisked off.

He hated solitude, and was always happy when the dogs and their puppies were occupying the stall next to him.

Grimm never accidentally injured the smallest puppy. The cat kept her kittens in his manger, and the proceedings of the family gave him much interest. This affectionate disposition was further exemplified in several ways.

He expected his mistress to come and see him often, and once, when she had been prevented by illness, and had not seen him for a fortnight, he determined upon reversing the order of things, and went to see her, walking through the hall to the drawing-room door, which he opened as usual; and great was her astonishment to see him triumphantly nodding his head, as if relieved to find she had not entirely disappeared.

In 1862 Grimm met with a serious accident. One of his fore legs was injured, and he ever afterward lifted it up for inspection when his mistress appeared, and thus learnt to shake hands.

On his recovery, a pony was bought to drive with him, and he was placed in double harness. He was devoted to his companion, and gnawed a hole at once in the partition between the stalls, in order to improve the means of communication.

Various other anecdotes might be told of this remarkable and intelligent pony; but he soon became unfit after this period for work, and was received into the pastures of the Agricultural College, Cirencester, where he obtained a home and every comfort until death terminated his eventful career.

SAGACITY OF A PONY.—GRIMM SURPRISING HIS MISTRESS BY ENTERING THE DRAWING-ROOM.

HOW THE TIGER IS TRAPPED AND HUNTED.

THE MIRROR-TRAP.

THE farmers of Bengal, whose cattle fall a prey to the tiger, do not suffer the ruinous raids to be perpetrated with impunity; occasionally, the thief is brought to justice and a violent death in a way he little expects.

One of the methods of revenge adopted by the herdsmen is to construct a light but strong scaffold, about eighteen feet high, near the spot where the half-devoured carcass is found. To the top of this platform the boldest man of the company mounts, armed with a matchlock loaded with an iron slug and a "tulwar," a thick-backed, razor-edged implement, very terrible in the hands of a strong-wristed man. As the enemy approaches, the friends of the lofty sentinel take a tender farewell of him, and take themselves out of harm's way.

By-and-by the tiger rouses in his lair, shakes himself, and thinks what he shall have for supper. At last it occurs to his gluttonous mind that there is some of yesterday's bullock left, and that, if the jackals and vultures have missed it, it will do for a snack. So he trots to the spot, finds the meat just as he had left it, and, sprawling by the side of it, prepares for a leisurely meal.

Meanwhile, the man on the scaffold among the trees is not asleep. His eyes follow every one of the tiger's movements. He rests his heavy matchlock on the protecting rail atop of the platform, and takes such deliberate aim that, in nine cases out of ten, the iron slug finds the heart of the brindled thief, and he rolls over dead.

Sometimes, however, the gunner's hand will falter at the critical moment, and the savage beast be only painfully wounded. Then, guided by the report of the matchlock, the tiger's glaring eyes discover its assailant, and creeping for a moment, to gird its tremendous sinews, it utters its murderous roar, and leaps at the platform.

Now is the strength of the frail-looking erection tested; should it come crashing to the ground, as sure as the matchlock-man was born he will presently become tiger's meat. This, however, does not often happen. The tall bamboo shafts will bend considerably before they will break, and though the man may be subjected to an unpleasant rocking, he will be all right if he holds on tightly.

Another thing in favor of this stage is, that the surface of the bamboo is so hard and sharp that the talons of the brute find by no means an easy anchorage; and all he may take by his prodigious leap will be a heavy fall. Should he, however, manage to hook on to any of the interstices within reach of his human foe, then the terrible tulwar is raised, a great paw lopped off, and down drops the tiger, helpless as a log.

By this time, the shouting of the matchlock-man, the noise of his piece, and the roaring of the savage beast, has roused half of the adjacent village, who swarm to the spot, armed according to their means, and mingle with their loudly expressed praises of the tiger-slayer the bitterest reproaches and bravest taunts for their now impotent foe.

Many traps and pitfalls are arranged to catch and kill the tiger, but of late, as a live tiger brings a good price for menageries, the natives try to take the Royal Bengal alive and intact.

One of the most ingenious of these is a very strong trap in which the bait—a miserable goat or other animal—is placed, while the ponderous lid closing the trap is kept open by a slight arrangement of bamboos, that will yield to the slightest touch, and these are connected with a string held by a native who, ensconced safely in some neighboring tree, watches for the prey.

On the opened lid of the cage a large mirror is placed, and as the tiger approaches, and rearing up, places his forepaws on the edge of the cage, he sees, as he supposes, another tiger about to seize the animal within.

Losing his usual caution, the tiger bounds into the cage, and the heavy lid at the touch of the cord falls, inclosing him securely, while he sates his hunger, unconscious that he is a prisoner.

Through the Heart of Japan.

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK,

Author of "Keep your Bounds," "Inventive Ben," "Orville and Dan," "The Chums at Harvard College," Etc.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TOFU'S DECISION.

JOHNNIE and Benkei almost crazed the waitress with their questioning.

They desired to learn the object of Tofu's visit to Tokio, and whether she had mentioned having expected to meet them.

Of course the servant knew nothing, but suspecting the truth, gave them very witty replies.

"Cannot we start to-night?" suggested Benkei.

"You can if you like," smilingly answered Orville. "We shall remain here."

"I'm ready," said Johnnie.

"Come, you fellows, be sensible," said Dan. "We have to visit Lake Briva and several other spots before we go to the old capital. Tofu will keep."

"No, *tofu* (bean curd) will not keep," answered Ben. "You go on to Briva, and we will proceed to Kioto."

"Chum," said Orville, "when we proposed to get rid of Brack, you reproached us for abandoning him. We're not going to part with you."

"Oh, but we're anxious to know our fate," cried Johnnie, shivering like a person with the ague. "I don't see that our leaving will make any difference to you. This is our fight; not yours."

"See here, old chum," good-humoredly answered Orv; "there's plenty of time. You'll be disappointed soon enough. You haven't a show with the princess. Ben drew the ripe persimmon. Come, be reasonable. Curl down by your *kotatsu*, and thank your stars you are not obliged to be out on the mountains to-night."

The rivals finally concluded to remain where they were until the morning, and resuming their snug nests. were soon fast asleep.

When they awoke it was raining furiously, and as all the paper screens serving for windows were tightly closed, the inn was lighted with candles and oil-lamps.

"We're in for it," chuckled Nami, glancing at the lovers. "The River Kiso has risen and swept away its bridges, and the ferry-boats dare not cross."

"How long will it be before it subsides?" anxiously asked Benkei.

"A week or ten days," answered the artist, winking at Orville. "Patience, my good friend. Patience is a noble thing to practice."

"Patience!" snapped Johnnie, who was walking the apartment like a lion does its cage. "I want to reach Kioto."

"Patience!" murmured Ben; "the poet, Yamato-Dake, said:

'The gambler can wait the cast of the die,
The chilled earth the appearance of the summer sun,
The fisherman the hooking of his prize,
But the lover has not this virtue.
He knows not patience.
Thus, impatiently, I long for thee,
Adzuma! adzuma!'" (My wife! my wife!)

Brackett paused in his walk, and addressing the doctor, observed:

"You needn't gush in that way, Ben. I tell you Tofu will never be Mrs. Benkei. That piano and the sewing-machine settled it."

This made everybody laugh.

For over a week the party were compelled to put up with the discomforts of a Japanese inn—that is, had to sit in a dimly-lighted apartment, filled with steam from the clothes of newly-arrived guests, and subsist upon native fare.

Johnnie growled like a bear.

Ben was quiet and patient.

On the morning of the eleventh day they were aroused by a terrific shock of earthquake, which almost scared them out of their senses.

The house was rocked like a cradle, and the chums were rolled first to one and then to the other end of the room, the *kotatsu* and *yagura* and the wadded quilts forming their beds being mixed up with them most unpleasantly.

Fortunately, the ashes of the fires were cold.

"What do you call this caper?" demanded Brackett, as the shocks became fainter, and he and his chums rose and surveyed the wreck.

"We have been visited by the *tatsu!*" (dragon), said Kura. "Cannot you smell him?"

"I can smell fire," said Orv.

Presently they heard the waitress screaming:

"*Hi-no-yoje!*" (Look out for the fire.)

The young men hastily collected their garments and dressed; then, as the flames burst into the upper end of the room, made their escape into the muddy street. Within twenty minutes "The Royal Bower of Happiness" was reduced to ashes.

"Come," said Benkei, "the earthquake dragon has cleared the sky. Let us start for Kioto."

They paid their bill, and left their hostess and her attendants raking amid the warm ruins for the stone *kotatsu*.

Upon reaching the bank of the river, they found it low enough for people to cross, so, hiring *ippiki* (men-carriers), the travelers were conveyed over the stream, which in one hour had been reduced from a brawling torrent to a sluggish rill.

The *ippiki*, who waded up to their waists in the black mud, were earning money very fast, spite of which they wanted to carry the travelers to Ogaki.

At first the chums objected.

"It's all very well to be thus expressed across a river," said Orv, "but I consider it degrading a man to use him like a donkey."

"Oh, these *ippiki* are not so thin-skinned," observed Nami. "Take my advice and let them carry you. I shall not walk another step."

After the *ippiki* had washed themselves they took the young men upon their backs and trotted off with them.

It was a novel sensation for them, even Orville and Dan having, up to that time, declined such a means of locomotion.

They rode peck-a-back, and each of their bearers carried a bamboo, on which they would lean when stopping to rest and blow.

When the explorers arrived at Ogaki they found the place in great confusion, the earthquake having played great havoc among the houses.

They paused at a wayside tea-stall, and dismissing their bearers, held a council.

"I propose we now follow the Nakasendo" (central mountain road), said Nami. "It passes the other side of this city. We can, by walking briskly, reach Kioto in three days."

"Anything to get there soon," said Johnnie.

"Yes, yes!" said Ben. "I am most anxious to see Tofu."

As they passed through the city Kura reminded them that it was the place referred to by the warrior Iyeyasu, when he said, "*Ogaki, waga te-ni otsuru.*" (Ogaki [the persimmon] has fallen into my hand.)

"Yes," said Benkei, "he traveled very much the route we are now taking. This is classic ground," adding, with a sigh, "I wonder whether the persimmon I covet will fall into my hand?"

"No," chuckled Johnnie; "you might as well give up all hope. The persimmon you refer to is not green enough to accept you."

On the second day they crossed the field of Sekigahara, where Iyeyasu fought the army of the league, and, in gaining a victory, was enabled to, for some centuries, banish Christianity from Japan.

In the pictures of the hero he is represented as wearing armor, but, instead of a helmet, has a towel knotted about his head.

Nami, who knew all about his famous countryman, and had painted hundreds of pictures illustrating Iyeyasu's life, briefly described the awful battle, saying:

"They mustered for the engagement in a dense fog. About eight o'clock A. M. it lifted, and they stood face to face. The contending armies sounded their conches and drums, and opened fire upon each other with matchlocks and arrows. Cannon were used with deadly effect, though the greatest slaughter was with sword and spear. At midday Iyeyasu ordered up his reserves, and made a final charge all along the line. The Christians wavered, and fled in dismay, and their wounded, rather than fall into the hands of the enemy, committed *hara-kiri*. The victors cut off forty thousand heads, and piled them in a heap. There it is," pointing toward a clump of trees ahead.

They walked through a village, and after visiting the shrine of Hachiman, inspected the *kubidzuka* (barrow or mound formed of human heads).

As the chums gazed upon the grass-grown pyramid Kura whispered:

"Iyeyasu little thought you Americans would ever stand here and look at the result of his day's work. He was the first shogun—the man who taught us to hate foreigners. Your arrival in Japan ended the power he created on this bloody field."

After viewing this and a granite monument erected to commemorate the event, they proceeded on their way, and the next morning reached Kioto.

The ancient city is intersected with a network of canals, crossed by innumerable bridges.

It appeared to be a centre of manufactures, and the travelers passed streets devoted to the making of bronzes, lacquer-ware, porcelain, silks and paper. But the glory of the place was in its temples and religious establishments, which numbered several thousands.

Being in direct communication by railway with Kobe and Osaka, Kioto boasted of an American hotel—or, rather, of a house kept in foreign style.

Knowing they would be fleeced if they lodged there, Orville decided to go a native inn, and by noon the party were enjoying an elegant repast, consisting of soup, fish and various vegetables and fruits.

"The first thing," said Johnnie, as he ended his meal, "is to find the princess."

This proved to be somewhat a difficult matter. However, love laughs at ordinary difficulties, and the young men finally learned that Tofu was staying with the head of her clan, an ex-Daimio named Kato Sobichi no Kozu. After they had procured American clothing, of which there was any quantity in the stores, the chums held a council.

"Suppose I call on Mr. Kato for you?" suggested Orville. "He may feel offended at your asking to see the princess."

"No; let Johnnie and I go and request an audience," said Benkei. "I am now the head of my family, my father having retired in my favor, and Brackett can speak for himself."

"I guess so," grinned Johnnie.

That afternoon the rivals hired *jin-riki-sha*, and were conveyed to Mr. Kato's house, where they sent in their cards and requested to see the ex-noble.

The servant ushered them into a reception-room, and presently their host entered, and bowing gravely, said:

"*Ko-nee-chua?*" (How are you to-day?) "I have been expecting you, Sir Benkei Yuzo."

"And not *me?*" faltered Johnnie.

"I have heard of you, professor," politely answered the gentleman; then, turning to Ben, continued: "I suppose your friend has come to act as your official witness?"

"Yes," answered Ben; "he will bear record that I, Benkei Yuzo, this day ask of you the hand of the Princess Ichijo, of Haruku."

Brackett gaped with astonishment.

Before he could reply, Mr. Kato said to the doctor:

"The Empress, learning that my niece was favorably inclined toward you, and that you were coming to this city, sent my relative here, I being the only person who could give the necessary consent to your union."

"But," began Johnnie, "*I've* got something to say about this matter. Miss Tofu and myself are as good as engaged."

"Hush!" whispered Ben, in English. "It is very rude for a witness to speak on these occasions."

"Witness!" growled Brackett. "I see! you have played off a nice trick on me;" then rising, continued: "Guess I'll git."

"Don't go," pleaded Benkei. "Stay and see me perform the Respectful Ceremony."

"Well," mumbled Johnnie, "I suppose I must."

He then relapsed into silence, and resuming his seat on the floor, watched and listened.

Benkei, acting as the head of his own clan, and being in a strange city, thrice formally requested the hand of the Princess Ichijo, and when the consent of her uncle was obtained, prostrated himself and exclaimed: "Now has the sun of happiness caused the blossom of my soul to expand."

"Wait one moment," said Mr. Kato, "I will bring the princess to you."

After the gentleman had quitted the room, Johnnie rose and said:

"Chum, you've won your hat. I bet you one, didn't I? Anyhow, I see I've no chance, and that I've been a donkey to imagine she cared for me. I'm sorry for the professor's daughter, though;" adding, with a brave attempt at a smile: "*Go-ke neign yo!*" (I wish you good health; or, Good luck to you, old boy!)

"Oh, stay and see her," urged the happy doctor. "She admires you as a friend."

Brackett begged to be excused, then hurrying from the house, entered the grounds of a beautiful temple, dedicated to the mother of Buddha.

"It's just like my luck!" he thought, as he seated himself near a dimly-lighted shrine. "First Sophie, and now Tofu. Ah, she's *persimmons* to me!"

HOW THE TIGER IS TRAPPED AND HUNTED.—THE MIRROR TRAP.

He sat and mused until the sound of ladies' voices aroused him, and, looking up, he beheld Tofu approaching with her aunt and female cousins.

Johnnie hid himself behind a screen and watched, thinking:

"Surely she does not believe in Buddhism?"

After the new-comers had kneeled and performed the respectful ceremony before the image of Maya Devi, Tofu moistened a paper prayer and threw it, ejaculating, as she did so:

"*Namu Amida Maya Butsu!*" (Hail, Great Mother of Buddha.)

He saw her burn some incense and throw more thank-offerings, and waited until she had retired, when he chuckled and said to himself:

"I'm cured! That spitball business has settled the question. She's very nice, but is more suited to Ben than to me. She'd horrify Beacon Street."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A JAPANESE WEDDING FEAST.

ON a bright morning in October, 18—, the home of the Benkeis in Saitama was crowded with friends assembled to partake of the wedding feast of Tofu and Benkei Yuzo.

In accepting Ben as her partner in life, the lady had renounced her title and position at court.

"I always liked Yuzo," she told Miss Sin, when the latter asked her why she had encouraged Johnnie Brackett. "Yes, I own I never seriously thought about his foreign friend, but Johnnie had such a way with him, and was so amusing, that I hated to tell him he had no chance; besides, your brother never said what he thought; therefore, until he proposed, how could I know?"

"That is so," smilingly replied the other. "I must own I admire Mr. Brackett very much myself."

As she spoke her brother entered the room, and after bowing to his bride, said:

"The guests are awaiting the illumination of your presence."

In a few moments Mrs. Benkei the elder, her daughter Tenjin, and a crowd of female relatives, swarmed into the apartment, whereupon Ben retired. After forming in procession, the ladies moved to the reception-hall, where sat, or rather squatted, old Mr. Benkei and the males of the family, with Orville, Dan, Johnnie, Don, Nami, Kura, Prince Ando, Jim Kidder and a host of other friends."

Benkei, who had gone round to the other end of the house, and had entered the hall simultaneously with his bride, rejoined her, and advancing to the *tokonoma* on which his father was kneeling, paused until his mother had taken her place beside her husband, then, with his lovely partner, performed the act of Respectful Salutation.

There was no vowing to do impossible things, no religious, or what we term heathen, ceremonies, few of the Japanese caring for such accessories to a wedding; notwithstanding which, Tofu was as securely tied to Benkei as though the knot had been made by a dozen *bonzs*.

When the happy pair rose, all present, but Mr. and Mrs. Benkei, senior, and very old relatives, prostrated themselves, the chums doing exactly like every one else.

After this part of the ceremony, the bride and groom took their places on the *tokonoma*, on the left of their parents, Sin and Tenjin kneeling on the right.

From that day Tofu belonged to the Benkei clan, and regarded her husband's parents as her own.

Every one was respectfully awaiting "The Golden Words," or advice given on such occasions by the father and mother.

These sentences, often quotations from the classics, are treasured by the young couple, and are afterward painted (written) on a *Kakimono* (wall-scroll), and suspended in the private room of the wife.

In some instances aged or honorable members of the family, and distinguished guests, will repeat a brief stanza, or utter an epigram. These, if very good, or the person is much beloved, are also inscribed on scrolls, and used as wall-decorations.

A friend of Ben's who was, by profession, an elegant writer, was squatting in a recess, ready to note down these utterances.

After a brief interval, during which Mr. Benkei, senior, sat as though in deep thought, he said:

"If you desire to govern your children first learn to govern yourself."

The bride and groom bowed low, the scribe rapidly ran off the characters on a strip of paper, and the assembly listened, glanced at one another, and murmured:

"*Hai!*" (Yes.)

When these sounds ceased Mrs. Benkei, senior, in a voice tremulous with emotion, nervously clutched her fan and said:

"Two eyes, two ears, one tongue." (Meaning, repeat but a fourth of what you see and hear.)

"*Hai!*" ejaculated all present. "*Hai, hai, hai!*"

After this was recorded Mr. Benkei Hirano, who had come from Wakamatsu for this occasion, said, in a voice obscured with the result of over-indulgence in *saké*:

"The agile *cup* attains great *eloquence*."

This speech, being a misquotation, caused much amusement, the sentence running:

"The agile *carp* (young scholar) attains great eminence."

"Anyhow, it's all right," hiccoughed the lacquer-goods dealer. "I know I have taken too much tea this morning, and am nervous."

When silence was obtained, Orville said, in Japanese:

"To know Nihon is to admire it. To know its noble people is to like them."

"Nihon for the Nihonese, with all nations as their friends," said Dan.

These sentiments were loudly applauded.

It was now Johnnie's turn to utter a saying that could be recorded. Instead of being, as usual, ready, he blushed, stammered, and finally blurted out:

"The day we celebrate. The best thing yet!"

This was received with shouts of laughter and cries of:

"*Yoro-shin!*" (All right.) "*Hai, hai, hai!*"

Presently, as the noise died away, Don Mortimer said:

"May the sword never flash between Nihon and the United States."

"*Arigato! arigato!*" (Thank you) vociferously from everybody.

After a pause Nami said, rolling his eyes as he spoke:

"The best thing in traveling the road of life is a companion" (meaning it was good to be married).

Kura glanced respectfully at the happy pair and murmured:

"The joy of our teacher warms our hearts. The *Yamato Damashi* (Spirit of Old Japan) is reborn in Benkei Yuzo. He has taught us how to turn our swords into fish and rice."

Ando remarked:

"Look in the face of a just man and you will behold the image of the gods."

After almost everybody had spoken, Johnnie nudged Jim Kidder, who, flushing like a girl, said:

"May there be no brakes in the domestic cable, and may branch wires be some day running all over this house."

"*Hai-hai-hai!*" from everybody.

Then, to the delight of Ben, his chums gave a genuine Harvard 'Rah!"

As they rose and prepared to inspect the magnificent presents, among which were some from the Emperor and Empress, a servant entered the room, saying:

"Master, some more foreign guests have arrived."

"I'll go and see who they are," said Orv.

In another moment they heard a cry of joy, such as a young fellow gives when his heart is full, then came a manly, bluff voice, saying:

"Mother and I felt lonely, Orv, so we followed you."

"It's father!" shouted Dan.

How can we describe the meeting?

Not only was it Mr. Fillamore, but with him were his wife and Rose, Mr. and Mrs. Stout (Nellie), and Mr. and Mrs. Skerry (Sophie).

"We all longed to see Japan, and Rose fretted so that we determined to follow you," said the happy parent. "We met Nellie and Sophie at the hotel in Tokio, and finding by the newspapers this was Mr. Benkei's wedding-day, came right on."

The feast was served partly in European and partly in Japanese fashion; everybody being provided with a bowl of *tofu* (bean curd).

Johnnie was the life of the assembly, and when he rose to make a speech, glanced across to Skerry and remarked, with a sly chuckle:

"This is the best thing yet—isn't it, old Sker?"

* * * * * *

We must here end our story, which has, in writing, brought to the author many memories of a brave, noble, true-hearted, gentle people, among whom he long resided, and for whom he still entertains the greatest respect and affection.

At some future time he may resume his pen and relate the further adventures of Johnnie Brackett and Kura, but this chapter concludes the history of the chums.

Orville and Dan, with Mr. and Mrs. Fillamore, Rose, and Mr. and Mrs. Stout remained in Japan until the following June, then returned home, via San Francisco.

The young men are now in partnership as importers of Japanese goods, and are making use of the knowledge they gained in Nihon.

Mr. and Mrs. Skerry live in Boston, where the gentleman practices law.

Don Mortimer is on the editorial staff of a New York paper.

Nami, that prince of jolly good fellows and clever artists, decorated the Satsuma ware for his friends, and sent it after them. He is still famous for his love of joking and hospitality to foreigners.

Kura sticks to Johnnie and is studying phrenology.

Benkei has been appointed one of the court surgeons, though, according to a newspaper we lately received from Tokio, he will soon revisit this country, and bring with him his wife and son, Orville.

Johnnie Brackett returned home, remained a week or two, and after seeing his parents, went back to Tokio. He has devoted his time to studying the language and literature.

If, in concluding this story, the greater portion of which has been founded upon fact, we have omitted to dispose of any one, we can only say that all the characters not accounted for are alive and prospering in the heart of Japan, and in taking leave of you for a time, exclaim, with the Japanese:

"*Sai-o-naro! Gokee-neighn-yo!*" (Farewell! I wish you good health!)

THE END.

PHIL TERRY'S GRIT.

By JACK JUDSON.

CHAPTER X.

[Continued from page 312.]

SAM BARTLE'S coming was regarded with surprise by the circle of loungers around the tavern fire. It was with difficulty they made their way from their respective homes close by to their usual rendezvous for evening companionship; and Sam Bartle lived six miles away, and had come on snowshoes—something must be the matter!

His story was soon told.

"He and Philip Terry had been out on the prairie together at the time of the storm. They had got separated. He himself had finally reached home, but the boy had not been seen; he was in search of him."

"You'll never see him alive, Bartle. There has not been another such a storm as that since the country was discovered," declared one auditor, and such was the opinion of all. No one had seen him or heard of him.

"Buried in a snow-drift, as sure as you're Sam Bartle," said the landlord, pouring out a glass of villainous red whisky, and offering it to his guest as a token of his sympathy.

"No, thankee, I don't want any o' that, but ef your wife 'll fix me up a bite of something hot, I'll eat some supper."

That business was soon arranged, and when Bartle returned from the back room, where his coffee and bread and meat had been served, place was made for him in front of the blazing wood fire, and one of the company, after casting a knowing glance around the circle, remarked:

"Say, Sam, we're all anxious to know how you and thet purty widder air gettin' along. Ain't spliced yit, be you?"

Every countenance in the room was on a grin, but Bartle replied with perfect calmness and good nature:

"We get along well enough. You all know how she come to be thar. She was a-goin' ter hev a claim staked off an' a cabin built this Fall, an' try to git fixed so 'et she could make a livin' fur herself an' her girl; but now this snow on the ground, and Philip Terry missin', I dun' no but she'll hev to change her plans. She did talk of movin' over here if thar was ary vacant room as she could hire fur a spell."

This reply changed the tone of the first speaker, and he inquired, quite respectfully, if the woman was "eddicated."

"Cause," he added, "thar's just a dozen families here that would like to git up a school this Winter ef they could git a teacher without its costing too much. If your widder is eddicated and won't expect big pay, why, mebbe we uns here could strike a bargain with her."

"Whar's your schoolhouse?" asked Bartle.

"We have none," responded another one of the company; "but we soon can have. If we determine to open a school, we will all join together and put up a house for the purpose. It can be done in a few days' time—inside of two weeks, at the longest."

"Wal, I don't know what she will say to ye, but you kin call on her an' find out, I reckon. She's got larnin, an' is a good woman—thet's all *I* know about it."

"Was this young feller you're lookin' after any 'lati'n to her?" inquired the landlord.

"No, nor to me, neither; but a finer boy never growed. You must all turn out to-morrow an' help look fur him. If he's dead, he must hev decent burial."

Sam Bartle's voice trembled; the rough fellows about him were kind-hearted enough, and they readily promised to assist in the search the next day.

A party of half a dozen men started out next morning upon snow-shoes, each one armed with a long pole, with which to probe the drifts that were piled up in every direction.

They spent nearly the whole day traversing the prairie, but with no result, and dispersed late in the afternoon, leaving Sam Bartle near his own door, weary and discouraged.

When he entered the cabin not a word was spoken; when their questioning looks fell on him he mutely shook his head, and Philip's name was not mentioned for many days.

Katie grew pale and sad, but no one spoke of it; they pitied her, but could say nothing comforting.

Sam Bartle, too, seemed quite unlike himself. He had become deeply attached to the boy, almost unconsciously to himself, and the sudden quenching of so young and promising a life seemed to him a terrible thing.

The weather grew steadily milder for some days, and the snow sank gradually away. The drifts remained longer, but little by little they, too, disappeared.

And every day after the bare ground began to show itself, Sam Bartle traversed the surrounding country in search of something he wished yet dreaded to see. But he never found it, and finally he gave up the quest.

Thus nearly two weeks passed away, and one morning two men were seen approaching the cabin. They proved to be a "committee" from Snaketown, empowered to engage Mrs. Barton's services as teacher, if she was willing to assume the office and would agree to their terms.

The matter was talked over in all its bearings, and the conclusion of it was that she accepted the situation.

They agreed to give her a town lot upon which to build a residence. The citizens were to assist in putting it up and in getting it ready for occupation. The schoolhouse was already begun, and both houses were to be finished within the month.

"If we are suited with you, and you are suited with us, we'll stake off a claim for you within two or three miles of town and help you to hold it un'il you are ready to improve it. We want the right kind of people in here at our settlement, and we're a-going to do all we can for 'em when we get 'em," remarked the chief spokesman.

As he was a widower of six months' standing, and Mrs. Barton was a very pleasing woman, he may have had designs in what he said.

The people of Snaketown were an enterprising set, and as the weather proved favorable, they carried out their programme regarding Mrs. Barton's residence and the new schoolhouse with great promptness.

Mrs. Barton traded her horses and wagon for such materials for her house as had to be bought, and for the labor required in finishing it off.

The rough work of getting in the logs, hewing them and raising them to their positions in the structure, was all done gratuitously.

And when the little residence was finished and furnished, it was as cozy and as snug a home as any pioneer need wish for.

The chinks between the logs were neatly and smoothly daubed with mortar, and inside the principal room—for there was a sort of shed back of the cabin for convenience in doing rough work and for the stowing away of lumber—the walls were hung with white muslin stretched over the logs and neatly tacked in place.

There was a rustic porch over the front door, and the roof of the cottage was as steep and "Gothicy" as the skill of the builders could bring to pass. Altogether, the "schoolmam's house" was something for Snaketown to be proud of, and proud of it Snaketown was.

All was done, the removal from Sam Bartle's accomplished, and school begun before Christmas.

No more terrible storms occurred during that Winter; the weather, although occasionally extremely cold, was generally quite moderate.

Mrs. Barton and Katie made warm friends in the little settlement, and as a "schoolmam" the widow was a decided success.

But there was a cloud in the sky of their prosperity; they could never forget the fate of the generous young friend who had found so warm a lodgment in their hearts, nor cease to sorrow for the mournful ending of all his bright plans for a happy future.

CHAPTER XI.

STRANGE NEWS.

SAM BARTLE argued to himself that Philip might not be dead—his body had never been found. He could not account for his continued absence, but still there was a possibility that he was alive.

"I'll dig that gold and put it away safe, before anybody else comes acrost it, so if ever he does git back it'll be ready fur him," he secretly determined. And all Winter, whenever he could make an opportunity, he toiled at that task.

His solitary cabin became a store-house of treasure that finally made him ill at ease to think of. There were thousands of dollars worth of gold hidden in various places beneath the floor.

His reputation as a successful breeder of and trader in cattle had more than once subjected him to attempts at robbery.

His cattle were further south, under the care of experienced herdsmen, and would not be brought up into his vicinity until Spring; but he was known throughout the country, and was supposed to keep at times large sums of money by him.

He was aware of all this, and lived ever on the alert, watchful, though appearing to be careless; therefore, when the gold had been pretty much all collected from the "pocket" in the rocks, where Philip had discovered it, he made up his mind to convey it to Denver, where he knew an assay-office had been located.

Here he could sell the gold and send the money received for it by express to St. Louis or New York, where it could be safely deposited and kept until called for.

Poor Doll's bones were bleaching in the ravine into which she had stumbled while endeavoring to find her way home through that blinding November storm; but another animal was purchased—a tall gray, that showed fire in his eye and supple strength in every movement.

"You're the boy to put distance between us an' them road-agents ef they should try to make acquaintance with our gold-bags—ain't you, my purty?"

And Bartle patted the sleek sides of his gray with perfect satisfaction in his purchase.

The delicate green of early Spring covered the prairie when he set out upon his dangerous errand. The air was bracing, the landscape beautiful, the turf beneath his horse's feet smooth and soft, yet he heeded none of these things.

He had, according to his own unaided calculation, about twelve thousand dollars worth of little gold nuggets in the canvas sacks disposed so snugly upon his good steed's back. The country swarmed with desperadoes, who, for one-tenth the amount he carried, would murder half a dozen men, and leave their bodies to be devoured by wolves, or other prowling, ravenous creatures of the wilderness.

Therefore, he gave little thought to the bright Spring weather, or the lovely scenery that lay before him. His attention was absorbed in watching for danger, in caring for his good gray, and in seeing that pistols and rifles were ever ready for instant use.

The first two nights of his journey he camped on the prairie, cooked his own supper, and slept wrapped in his own blankets.

But the third day he struck the stage-route, and before night came to a shanty by the roadside, which proved to be a station belonging to the stage company, where horses were kept and changed.

The place seemed pretty much deserted when he arrived. No one lived there but the man who had charge of the station. After Bartle had ascertained that he could get something to eat there and have the privilege of sleeping under the shelter of its roof, he provided his horse with quarters for the night, stowed his luggage where he could keep his eye on it, and began to look about him.

The house had but one room; a huge fireplace occupied nearly the whole of one end of it, and as the evenings thereabouts were still cold, and the cooking for the establishment was done on its hearth, there was a goodly fire glowing within it.

At the opposite end of the room was a long, wide bench, or bunk, extending from wall to wall across the shanty, and piled up with buffalo-robes and blankets. 'Twas here that sleeping accommodations were to be sought by any weary traveler that chance brought to pass a night at the station.

And from beneath this pile of robes and blankets, Sam Bartle, as he sat in a corner of the fireplace, preparing to light his well-filled pipe, imagined he heard most strange and half-smothered sounds. He turned a listening ear in that direction, but all was still. The station-keeper was bustling about with frying-pan and coffee-pot upon the stone hearth, so that he had been mistaken in fancying the noise to proceed from the bunk.

But presently he heard it again, more distinctly than before, rising above all the clatter of preparation for supper. Being altogether unable to determine from what or whom such unearthly sounds could come, he rose to his feet and peered about him with the resolve written on his face and expressed in his attitude to ascertain the source of these mysterious and most peculiar noises.

There was no one in the shanty but himself and the station-keeper, that he could see—there was not a dog or a child, but there was *something*.

He was about to cross the room, when his host, coffee-pot in hand, exclaimed:

"Supper is ready, gentlemen!"

Bartle looked around to see who was meant by "gentlemen." No one responded, and the man placed his coffee-pot on the table and approached the bench of buffalo-robes.

"Supper, gentlemen, supper," he cried, poking the bedding about vigorously, and presently, with mighty yawns and unearthly groans, two stalwart fellows, dressed in buckskin clothes and wolfskin caps, with shaggy hair and bearded faces, emerged from beneath the pile and sauntered to the table.

"Wal, ef 'twar you a-snorin' that excited my curiosity jest now, you're thunderation good at that kind o' music," remarked Bartle, coolly, while the two stared at him without any salutation.

When Bartle ceased speaking, they burst into a great laugh, and one of them exclaimed:

"Didn't skeer ye, did we, stranger?"

"Wal, ef I wasn't skeert, I was purty near it," responded Bartle, good-naturedly.

"Haw, haw, haw! Bludger, set out a jug o' whisky and some mugs to swaller it out of. Stranger, take a drink."

"Coffee for me, an' no offense, friends."

"Sartin, sartin. This is a free country, and nobody needn't drink 'long o' me 'less he wants to. This pardner o' mine is a teetotaler, too. Here's health to all o' ye."

And the speaker swallowed his mug of whisky and sat down to supper.

When the meal was over, the four men drew near the fire, lit their pipes and smoked away in silence for half an hour or more.

They eyed one another covertly, each studying the other, as such men do, and although unlearned in many things, they can read character well.

Finally Bludger, the station-keeper, spoke.

"The stage ain't due till 'leven o'clock, and if any of you can tell a story to make the time pass while we are sitting here, I'd be glad to hear it."

Sam Bartle shook his head, and declared that he had nothing to tell.

Bludger then looked at the other two men, as if expecting one of them to offer his services, and at last the one who drank the whisky stretched himself, took his pipe from his mouth, tipped himself back in his chair, and began:

"Stranger"—to Mr. Bartle—"it's likely you don't know who we air, me and my pardner. Wal, he's Dumb Ike and I'm Talkin' Joe. Haw, haw, haw! You see we've been pardners hunting and trapping together for nigh onto ten year, and everybody that knows one knows t'other. I am an everlastin' talker—gift of gab, ye know—ought to have been a preacher, but my folks didn't tend to it when I was young—and *he* scarcely ever opens his jaws to let words out. What he says counts, though, you'd better b'lieve, and he kin laugh—you ort to hear him."

"And snore," interrupted Bartle.

"Haw, haw, haw!" laughed both hunters, in concert.

"Wal, as I said, we air allers together, and I do talkin' enough fur both of us, so we got nicknamed, and don't go by no other title now but Dumb Ike and Talkin' Joe.

"Wal, him and me hev been up on the Softwater and through that region of country all Winter, trapping and hunting—as solitary a place fur humans as ever you laid eyes on—and a spell ago we concluded 'twas about time fur us to cut out for home.

"We had our camp built up middlin' close to the river, and our canoe was hid in the bushes, whar we could clap hands on it and shove off into the water in less'n no time, if we smelt Injuns.

"Wal, we'd sot the day to start on our return—hed covered the last cache and cooked our last supper of roasted fish—sech fish as we found in the Softwater you never see, stranger!—and had curled down with our feet to the coals, thinkin' of makin' an 'arly start in the morning, and not thinking about much else only that we was most uncommon tired and sleepy, when all to wonst, without makin' as much noise as a ghost, the figger of an Injun crept inside our hut. We was both on our moccasins and had our rifles p'inted at him before he could wink, and in another instant he would a been stretched out, but he threw up his hands and said:

"'Jim no Injun; don't shoot!'

"We held our pieces ready and waited to hear more. He spoke fast, but in a low voice, and said:

"'I've been among the Sioux all Winter; I'm a captive; they expect to surprise and murder you two and get all your furs; they've been watching you all day; thar's fifteen of 'em hidden in the rocks just back of here. If they hear a sound and suspect themselves discovered, they will surround your camp instantly. I wish to escape—what can we do?'

"My hair crept a little, fur I knew the feller was tellin' the truth, and fifteen Injuns ag'in us two or three, in such a spot as we was in, with no 'arthly chance to get away without being popped at from behind the rocks, was a scaly situation!

"So, sez I to Ike:

"'Thar's jest one chance, Ike.'

"He looked me in the eye, but didn't say nothing.

"'We must trust to our canoe,' sez I.

"'The cañon—what canoe ever went through it?' sez he, lookin' mighty gloomy.

"'Twas a bright, moonlight night—almost as light as day, and jest then we saw half a dozen Injuns skulking along from one big rock to another, still closer to the hut.

"Ike looked from them to me, and sez he:

"'We'll chance it.'

"'Git a good ready, then,' sez I, 'and we'll cut for the canoe. It's a big one and a strong one, and will hold us three if we're careful.'

"So we gathered up ourselves and our rifles and broke for the river. Ike stood on the bank, with his rifle ready to drop the first redskin that showed himself, while the other fellow and me launched the canoe and stowed ourselves away; then he dropped in, and the canoe shot from the shore and headed down stream, plunging into the cañon before the Injuns, who had rushed to the bank, had time to get their wits at work. As we dashed into the boiling flood we heard a signal whoop, and looking back we saw too large canoes filled with men coming round a point in the river above our camp, and come flying after us, urged on by their paddles.

"After we got through the first cañon there was a long stretch of middlin' smooth water, and here we thought for sure they'd overhaul us. But just as we'd got purty bad skeered our canoe began to whiz along like a bullet from a rifle, and we found we had struck another rapid, and were just a-flyin'. But it want long afore we seen the foremost canoe in the chase on the crest of the rapid, and it came after us like a streak of lightning, when all to once the other canoe come shooting down, and struck smack on a rock jest under water. It riz right up in the air, and when it came down it went to pieces, and them Injuns never yelped agin.

"We could see then that the other canoe would a' backed out o' the scrape if it could, but the walls of rock along the river thar was sometimes a hundred feet high, and there want no kind of a chance to land.

"Don't talk about your electric telegraph to me. Didn't we whiz! Wall, we come to a place whar the rocks jest about met overhead, and as we was goin' through we heerd a sound that made us creep all over. 'It's the falls!' says I. Ike didn't say nothing, but jest looked all around, as if sayin' good-by to the world he'd been brought up in; and then I looked over to our passenger. He hadn't said one word all this time, but as my eye met his he says, says he:

"'I'd rather be dashed to pieces in the water than be taken by them Injuns!'

"And he straightened himself up and never flinched a hair as we swept on."

"Grit!" muttered Sam Bartle.

"You'd better b'lieve it!" assented the narrator. "Wal, in another minute the current caught us; we went over and down, down, whirled to and fro, as in a maelstorm, beaten and smothered, dashed here and there. But after a while we came out beyond the roaring and boiling at the foot of the falls, Ike and me each a-holdin' to his paddle, and the other feller a-hangin' on to a piece of the canoe that, somehow or another, had stuck in his hands. Directly we seen t'other canoe a-comin' over empty. It shot away out, and lit right-side up on the water, and I soon grappled it, and we dragged ourselves in, a purty much used-up set. We never seen no more o' them Injuns, neither. They'd gone to join their brethrin that paddled the other canoe.

"Wal, the river kinder subsided, and went along quite peaceful like after we got away from them falls, and we slipped along without any trouble till toward morning, when the moon went down and we pushed to land, made a fire and dried our clothes, and warmed ourselves. We were purty nigh froze by that time, fur we'd been well soaked in the water, and the night was chilly, and young Terry—Phil Terry he said his name was—wasn't as tough as me, and Ike—what in blazes ails ye, stranger?"

"What is he—what's Phil—what's Phil, I say?" stammered Bartle, springing to his feet and catching Talking Joe by the shoulder with a grasp that was like a vise.

"Hands off, stranger," said Joe, good-naturedly. "What's Terry to you, I want to know?"

"To me—to me!" spluttered the delighted Bartle, unable to recover from his surprise. "I reckon you may o' heard him speak of a friend o' his—Sam Bartle?"

"By jinks! Sam Bartle! let's shake hands—shake

—shake hands! Here comes the stage—hooray! It's like a play in the theatre down to Saint Louis. Don't you stir out of this shanty, Sam Bartle. I'm expecting a friend o' mine in this same stage-coach!" and Talking Joe rushed out of the house, and before the bewildered Bartle had recovered his presence of mind he came back, pushing before him a young fellow clad in half-Indian, half-hunter style, in whom, at one glance, he recognized his quondam protégé, Philip Terry.

CHAPTER XII.

PHILIP it was, indeed; brown as wind and sun could make him, with moccasined feet and buckskin leggins; a blanket wrapped around him in lieu of coat and vest, and no covering for his head but his own brown locks.

Talking Joe and his "pardner" looked on with delight when the meeting took place, Sam Bartle fairly hugging the boy, and Philip too happy and surprised at the sight of his old friend to be able at first to utter a single word.

"The boy hed kind o' gin out—sprained his foot and couldn't keep up. We just left him back here a piece fur the stage to pick up when it came along," explained Talking Joe, when the excitement had subsided a little.

"Those new friends of mine have been very kind to me, Mr. Bartle," said Philip, glancing around at the two trappers with sparkling eyes.

"Oh, shut up; who give us warning of them Injuns, and likely saved our skalps by it?" cried Joe.

"And don't you 'Mr. Bartle' me any more, Phil. I told you that when we was first acquainted, an' now I tell ye again."

"Well, then, let it be 'Uncle Sam'; will that suit you any better?" laughed Philip.

"It'll do," was the reply. And from that time on 'Uncle Sam' it was.

It was now pretty well along toward midnight.

The two trappers and the station-keeper retired to the long bunk at the further end of the room, and were soon sound asleep, but Philip and his old friend sat long over the smoldering fire, for there were many questions to be asked and answered on either side. Bartle explained to Philip why it was that he was so far from home, and then settled down to hear the account of what had befallen him after their separation in the storm.

"When I found myself alone, that horrible roaring in the air, the blinding snow, that seemed to penetrate like needles through my clothing, the rushing of the wind that seemed to come from every side at once, drove me almost wild, and I felt like throwing myself flat upon the ground to be covered by the snow; but I had sense enough to know that I must keep moving, and so I fought my way, steering, as I imagined, toward the cave. I thought that we were nearer that than any other shelter, and I aimed to reach it. On and on I went, after stumbling and falling until I was nearly exhausted. Over and over again I was on the point of giving up, but I knew it would be certain death if I did, and so would persevere.

"Finally the wind fell, but it kept on snowing; the whole appearance of the country was changed. In fact, the snow fell so thickly that I could not see any great distance around me, and was uncertain in what direction I was traveling.

"My limbs began to pain me dreadfully after I had wandered about for, what seemed to me, several hours, and I was afraid from the prickling feeling in my feet that they were freezing; it became painful for me to move at all, and I was on the point of giving up—my head was dizzy and I felt as I have sometimes felt when sick and delirious with fever—when I discovered just before me a curl of smoke coming out of what seemed to me to be a snowdrift. I stumbled on toward it, and reached the spot, but I remember nothing of how.

"The next thing I was conscious of was that I was lying on some buffalo-skins in an Indian hut; my feet were swollen and useless, and my whole body was racked with terrible pains."

"An Indian woman was cooking some kind of a mess over a little smudge of fire built on the ground in the middle of the wigwam. She made me eat some of it, and was kind to me in her way. A few days after this I found that the party—there were twenty or thirty of them altogether—were getting ready to move on. I was dreadfully anxious to know what was to be done with me, but I could not understand a word they said, and was too helpless and crippled to undertake to get away from them. One morning they wrapped me up in skins and blankets and mounted me on a wiry little pony, which was led by the squaw in whose wigwam I had been taken care of.

"We traveled eight or ten days. Then we came to a valley in among the mountains, where the rest of the tribe were, and where they were to pass the Winter.

"They treated me well enough, and when I got strong again, they adopted me into the tribe, and before I left them were talking of me setting up a wigwam of my own and taking a squaw to wait on me."

Here Philip laughed, but Bartle, who hated the whole Indian race, only growled, and the boy went on:

"Some of the young men discovered early in the Spring the haunt of those two trappers and an expedition was formed avowedly for fishing and hunting, but really to murder the trappers and get their furs.

"The men were known to the Indians, and had a great reputation for skill and bravery, so they made the party a large one, and were certain of success. I had overheard enough to know what was on foot, but pretended ignorance, and begged to go with them to catch fish. They objected at first, but were so confident in their own strength and in the plan they had laid to take the trappers by complete surprise, that they finally consented.

"I was so excited by the prospect before me that I could neither eat nor sleep till we were fairly on the way, but I appeared as cool and unconcerned as possible, and disposed of what I couldn't eat to the dogs.

"I had thought the matter over and over and laid twenty different plans, but at last settled upon this: I would watch for an opportunity, warn the trappers, throw myself upon their protection, and leave the rest to them.

"Fortune favored me; no one suspected that I knew the real object of the expedition; I succeeded in slipping into the trappers' camp, and the rest my good friend over there has told you.

"So here I am, safe and well, but not in very presentable rig. Uncle Sam, what will I do for some clothes?"

"Thunderation! hain't you got twelve thousand dollars right here in these sacks? You kin buy out a clothing-store when we get to Denver, of you want to!"

"I would not want to do quite that, Uncle Sam," laughed Philip.

Then, as the night was wearing fast away, the two gathered up such bedding as they could find, and stretched themselves upon the floor in front of the fire, with the gold safely stowed between them.

The next morning Bartle was persuaded to leave his tall gray in the care of the station-keeper, and take passage with Philip in the stage for Denver.

When this arrangement was concluded, the trappers declared—or, rather, Talking Joe declared for both—that they would go, too.

"We're bound to see this thing played out—ain't we, Ike? 'Mysterious disappearance! Unhappy uncle! Unexpected meeting!' Jinks! it's better'n any theatre. Guess I'll write it down with a few more big licks stuck in, and take it down to St. Louis fur a present to some o' them acting fellers—hey, Ike?"

According to this arrangement, then, that all four should go, a queer-looking company took places in the coach when it drew up at Station No. —. A nervous passenger, after a hasty survey of the strapping and shaggy-haired mountaineers, and the nondescript apparel of the youngest of the party, concluded that he would be safer upon the outside seat with the driver, and vacated the space he had occupied inside in a great hurry.

Another gentleman, of grave countenance and gold-bowed spectacles, took out his notebook after a careful study of Philip's *tout ensemble*, and jotted down the extraordinary fact that Indians were sometimes blue-eyed and brown-haired!

After which effort in the cause of science he, too, retreated to an outside seat, so that our party of four were left in exclusive possession of the inside accommodations.

And as the trappers, with their usual shrewdness, comprehended the whole affair, they nearly raised the roof off the coach with their tremendous "Haw! haw! haws!"

In fact, there is no species of unearthly sounds ever heard in mountain regions that *didn't* roll forth upon the startled and alarmed ears of the *outsiders*. The driver knew the men and understood the joke, so that when appealed to to interfere, he declared that "nothing could induce him to put so much as a finger inside the coach by way of remonstrance, for if he *should* be so venturesome, he'd never expect to hold reins again!"

At the next station the poor fellows dismounted, and decided to "lay over" for the remainder of that day to await the coming of another coach!

Our jovial party reached Denver safe and sound, and without loss of time the business that brought them there was transacted. Bartle easily exchanged the gold for money.

Then Philip, anxious to discard his uncivilized garb, found his way to a clothes-dealer's, and soon after emerged therefrom a much better dressed young man than when he went in.

There was not much to be seen in this young "city." It was still in its first stage of improvement from its native wildness, and swarms of savages could still be seen in its grassy streets. Red shirted miners and uncouth mountaineers, too, were to be seen swaggering about. Bartle and Philip felt no desire to remain a day longer than was necessary, and at once set about looking for a horse which Philip would need for the journey home. They found and purchased a good animal before evening, and then all was in readiness for the return journey next day.

By the time all this business was concluded, Mr. Bartle declared that his stomach was "cryin' cupboard," and at Philip's invitation the whole party repaired to the "fashionable restaurant," where more oysters were disposed of in a short time than was usual, even in that region of hungry miners and voracious prospecters.

The mountaineers declared, when they bade Philip good-by next day, that some time they would pay him a visit, and he might remember the promise.

An eventful journey brought our travelers to the cabin-door in good time.

Philip declared that it seemed dreadful lonesome not to have Mrs. Barton and Katie there to welcome them; but Mr. Bartle remarked that it was a right good thing to have a pleasant place to go a-visiting, and he reckoned that *somebody* would be awful glad to see a certain young man make his appearance alive and well.

The day following was Saturday, a bright Spring day, sunny and warm.

Mrs. Barton and Katie were at work in the garden in front of their little home. They were planting vines about the rustic portico, and laying plans for flower-beds yet to be made. So busy were they that they did not notice an approaching visitor until he was almost beside them.

Then, hearing a footstep, Katie looked up.

"Philip!" she cried, and sprang toward him with outstretched hands.

Mrs. Barton "followed suite," and I am not sure but there were tears on the cheeks of every one of the three, and kisses exchanged all around.

It was a happy meeting. Katie felt that now she could afford to be joyous and take delight in the beautiful weather and in the adornment of their cozy cabin-home.

Many times did Phil ride his "prancing steed" across the prairie to the "schoolmarm's" house, and often, very often, did "business" require his presence in Snaketown. But he was really growing into a personage of considerable importance.

Mr. Bartle had taken him into partnership in the cattle business; he had laid himself out a ranch, and was improving it, and he had bought a number of town lots in the village.

So when, about three years after his arrival, a poor, homeless boy, in the Territory, he heard from his mother that John Harris was dead, he urged her to sell her farm and come to him. The country was settling up rapidly, and he thought she would do well to leave the old home, where they had been so unhappy, and come to live where he could care for her.

When she consented to do so he built for her, before her arrival, a tasteful house on one of his prettiest lots, and had it all ready for occupation when she came.

* * * * * *

Years have passed away since the events related in this narrative took place.

Snaketown has changed its name, and is a flourishing young city. A railroad passes through it, and it no longer considers itself "out of the world."

The little log schoolhouse has disappeared, and in its stead stands a tasteful edifice, called "The Academy." It is presided over by Mrs. Barton, who has kept pace with the times, and fitted herself, year by year, for so important a position.

She has, for her assistant, a beautiful young lady named Susy Terry, but how long she will remain a teacher or a Terry depends upon her persistency in refusing certain offers of a matrimonial character.

Her mother, contented in her new home and in the society of her beloved children, is a much happier woman than when she lived under the influence of the mean and cruel-minded John Harris.

Philip and Katie are married, and a handsomer or a happier couple it would be hard to find.

His ranch is a model for other men to copy, his horses have the glossiest coats, and carry their heads higher than any other pair about town; and when "Uncle Sam" comes to visit them and is taken behind this spanking team to see "the improvements," he declares that nobody could drive such "critters" but some one who, like their owner, "hes lots o' grit."

Sam Bartle is still hale and hearty, but it seems to his young friends to be a lonely life for him in his solitary cabin, and they sometimes urge him to come and live with them, but he generally replies that he "Enjoys himself mighty well as it is, and he likes to smoke his pipe in his own chimney corner."

THE END.

Young Pickwick's Schooldays.

CHAPTER LX.

THE DOCTOR PATS TOM ELY ON THE HEAD.

TINKLE and Bob Fairfit rose with the lark. After taking leave of Welldone, they set out for the village.

Mr. Belcher's blinds were drawn down.

He had not yet opened his eyes on the new day.

Tinkle and Fairfit, therefore, passed through the turnpike gate unmolested.

Having made their purchases, they began to retrace their steps.

But this time they were not so fortunate.

Mr. Belcher was now wide awake, and standing at the door.

"Halloa!" he cried. "Where have you been, you dissipated young ruffians?"

"We have been to a party," returned Tinkle, who did not know what to say.

"Been to a party?" cried the discreet old buffer. "You must have come away very late. Do yer think as how I believes that there story? Look at yer togs. People don't go to a party in a state like that."

Tinkle and Bob Fairfit looked down at their dusty, torn and travel-stained garments.

"It is no use arguing with Belcher," whispered Bob. "Our only plan is to make a dash through the gate."

"I shan't," said Tinkle.

"What's your objection?"

"We can't run with all these parcels," returned Tinkle.

At this moment Mr. Belcher became aware that they were carrying something.

"Come, now, what have you got in that there parcel?" he asked.

"Find out," cried Bob.

"I mean to," said Belcher, making a rush at them.

Old Belcher managed to catch Bob, and forcibly taking the parcel from him, began to examine its contents.

"Why, I'm blest if it ain't grub," ejaculated Belcher.

With these words he pulled out a large German sausage, which Tinkle had purchased with his own pocket-money.

"What are you going to do with our parcel?" asked Tinkle.

"Going to keep it, in course," returned Belcher. "What did yer think?"

"I think you are an old thief," cried the indignant Tinkle.

"Yer calls me names, does yer?" said Belcher, giving Tinkle a tap on the nose, with the key of the gate, which hung from his waist.

"I'll lock you up," said Tinkle. "How dare you hit my nose, you nasty old buffer?"

"I don't want no row," said Belcher.

He heard the sound of cart-wheels, and feared that the boys might elicit the sympathy of the driver.

"If you don't want a row you must give us our things," cried Tinkle.

"I don't want to be hard on yer," said Mr. Belcher. "I'll let you go through that there gate without a word if you'll make me a present of this 'ere sausage. It ain't axing much, because the doctor always said as how if I see'd you with any grub I was to keep it for my trouble."

"Choke yourself with the sausage, if you like," cried Bob Fairfit, who was glad to get off with the other things.

Belcher handed the parcel back, and put the German sausage under his arm.

"I'm very much obliged to yer," he said, as they went through the gate. "It is indeed kind to make such a handsome present to a poor lonely old man like me."

This was said for the benefit of a sleepy carter from whom he was taking toll.

As the cart jogged away Mr. Belcher leered over his half-door at the two boys.

Tinkle could not stand this.

It was too much for his nerves.

There was a large stone in the middle of the road.

Tinkle picked it up and poised it in his hand.

"What are you going to do?" asked Bob Fairfit.

"Break the old beast's windows," returned Tinkle. "The stone won't hurt him, because he is standing at the door."

"Don't be foolish," cried Bob Fairfit, trying to prevent the stone being thrown.

He feared the consequences of such a rash act.

But Tinkle was obstinately bent upon having his own way.

He threw the stone with great force.

Crash went the window!

"That's for stealing a sausage that cost me three shillings," cried the irate Tinkle, "you gooseberry-eyed old thief."

To the surprise of the two boys Mr. Belcher took the destruction of his windows in good part.

He seemed to look upon it as a joke.

"What are you laughing at?" asked Tinkle.

Belcher grinned from ear to ear.

"Fire away, my lads!" he cried; "smash 'em all."

"I will," said Tinkle, selecting a large stone, and crash went another pane of glass.

"Keep the pot a-boiling," cried the discreet old buffer. "If it amuses you it don't hurt me."

"Now, they are all smashed, I feel contented," cried Tinkle.

"You haven't done me no harm," observed Mr. Belcher.

"I have smashed your windows, anyhow," replied Tinkle.

But he began to think that he had made a mistake.

"Who do you s'pose pays for them there windows?" asked Mr. Belcher, rubbing his stomach to keep down his pleasurable emotion.

"You, to be sure," cried Tinkle.

"Not me," returned the discreet old buffer, giving a spasmodic chuckle.

"What does the old idiot mean?" cried Tinkle.

"I mean," said Mr. Belcher, leaning over his half door, "that the parish pays for 'em. The beadle will wait upon Doctor Waddle afore long, see if he don't, and lock you boys up. Ha, ha!"

Tinkle groaned.

"Are you speaking the truth?" he cried.

"Do I look like a man wot has got to pay for having his windows mended?" asked Mr. Belcher, lighting his long pipe, and puffing away at it with great enjoyment.

"Then this lark will cost me a month's pocket-money," thought Tinkle.

"What does it matter?" whispered Bob Fairfit. "The doctor will stop all our money, and it may as well go to the parish."

"You are right," returned Tinkle. "Oh, how I wish that we were safely up on the roof!"

"So do I," said Bob; "but how we are to get there I don't know. We must advance with caution."

"What are you a-jawing about?" asked Mr. Belcher, suspiciously. "Why don't you go on, and let me eat your nice present of the sausage?"

"Never you mind," returned Tinkle.

"I'll tell you, if you don't split," said Bob, approaching the discreet old puffer; "bend down a little lower—so."

Mr. Belcher bent down, in the belief that he was about to have his curiosity satisfied, and Bob immediately whipped the large sausage from under his arm, and ran off with it.

"Oh, you young imp! bring that sausage back!" roared Mr. Belcher. "It's mine."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Bob Fairfit. "Catch me if you can"—running after Tinkle.

"Wait until I get hold of yer! Oh, to think I've lost my sausage!" cried Mr. Belcher; and again Bob Fairfit's irritating laughter broke upon his ear.

The boys made for home with all speed.

As they approached the house, they saw three figures standing before the gate.

"Look! there's Tom Ely, the heavy-eyed man and Doctor Waddle in close conversation," exclaimed Bob; "let's get behind the hedge."

Tinkle and Fairfit pushed their way through the hedge.

They crouched down, meaning to watch their opportunity and make their way round to the back of the house.

But, to their great annoyance, Doctor Waddle, the heavy-eyed man and Tom Ely walked slowly down the road, and came to a standstill close to their hiding-place.

The two boys peered through the hedge.

Bob Fairfit suddenly nudged Tinkle.

He pointed to Tom Ely.

Tinkle hastily clapped his hand over Bob's mouth to prevent him from bursting into a roar of laughter.

Tom Ely's face was changed out of knowledge.

He had two beautiful black eyes and a bruise on the bridge of his nose.

"This is shocking," said Doctor Waddle, who was standing close to the boys, with his back toward the hedge; "but what I want to know is how Ely came to be out that hour of the night?"

"When we saw the boys preparing for the barring out," returned Mr. Leadbitter, "he was so afraid of being implicated in it that he took to his heels and ran away."

"Tom Ely, your hand," said the doctor; "you have proved yourself my best pupil; I can scarcely bear to think of your being set upon by those young savages."

"Poor boy!" said the heavy-eyed man; "they dashed him against a tree and left him for dead."

Here Tinkle gave Bob Fairfit such a sharp pinch, saying: "Serve him right!"

"I hope you have recovered from your sorrow through the death of your dear little son," said the doctor.

"Ah, yes," said the heavy-eyed man, and the light flittering through the green leaves made him look very ghastly indeed. "When I heard the dreadful news about Benny, I was quite overcome."

"No doubt," said the doctor.

"I am very glad I did not tell you where to communicate with me," observed the heavy-eyed man. "That omission has saved me much pain."

"I'll tell you what it is," said Tom, abruptly; "the Diddler bribed Tinkle and Bob Fairfit to follow me, and to try to make away with me."

"That Diddler is a bad boy," said the doctor, shaking his head; "I have fed and clothed him for many years, and he has treated me with the basest ingratitude."

"It is the way of the world," said the heavy-eyed man.

"Indeed it is," said the doctor, blowing his nose with his red silk pocket-handkerchief.

Tinkle shook his fist at the unconscious Waddle.

Mr. Leadbitter stood biting his nails.

He evidently wanted to say something, but seemed doubtful of the effect it would have upon the doctor.

"You have heard the story of the two lockets?" observed the doctor.

Leadbitter nodded.

"It seems to me that the Diddler will give you trouble when he gets a little older," continued the doctor, significantly.

"If he gets the chance," interposed Tom Ely.

"Hush!" cried the heavy-eyed man.

"Now look here, my dear sir," said Waddle; "what's the use of beating about the bush? You want to gain possession of the Diddler?"

The heavy-eyed man threw a quick glance around.

"Speak lower," he said, taking the doctor by the arm.

They began talking in an undertone, and presently walked away, leaving the coast clear for the two boys.

"This is a pretty business, isn't it?" cried Bob Fairfit.

"It looks fishy," replied Tinkle, adding, "now is our time to make our way round to the back of the house."

"Right you are. Off we go!" cried Bob.

CHAPTER LXI.

PRISONERS OF WAR.

ON passing through the back gate the first thing that attracted the attention of Tinkle and Bob Fairfit was the flag which Pickwick had put up, floating in the breeze.

"It must be jolly up there," said Bob.

"Yes," replied Tinkle; "but I don't see how we can join in the fun."

"Oh, we will manage it somehow," said the more hopeful Bob.

They now had an extended view of the playground.

As they passed the outhouse, Bob gave a cry of astonishment.

"Look!" he cried; "here's old Miffins and Diddler having a set-to."

Tinkle followed the direction of his eyes, and saw Miffins and the Diddler struggling and fighting.

"Hurrah, Bob! Let's help the Diddler," cried Tinkle.

"We will," returned Bob.

The two boys hastily deposited their parcels in the outhouse.

"Come on, then," said Tinkle. "Now, both together—charge!"

They then rushed toward the combatants, and over went Miffins.

At this moment they heard the noise of the crank and the cheery "heave ho!" of young Pickwick from the roof.

It was in vain that Miffins tried to prevent the Diddler from being drawn up in the air.

The rope was securely fastened round his waist, and he was bound to go.

Miffins made a desperate resolution.

If the Diddler went he would go too.

YOUNG PICKWICK'S SCHOOLDAYS.—"THEY SAW THE FAT BOY ADMIRING A HUGE GERMAN SAUSAGE."— SEE PAGE 327.

He clutched at the seat of the Diddler's trousers, and was rising mysteriously in the air, when Tinkle and Bob Fairfit caught him by the legs.

Miffins retained his hold upon the Diddler's trousers, but the cloth gave way, and he fell to the ground with a howl of rage.

He quickly jumped up and seized the two boys.

The Diddler, looking down to see the cause of Miffins's sudden fall, beheld Tinkle and Bob Fairfit in the hands of the enemy.

"I can't come to your aid!" he cried. "I'm being drawn up too fast—awkward—very."

The two boys had no time to answer the Diddler.

They were struggling to escape from Miffins.

The gentleman of property put out his long arms and firmly grasped the two boys by the collar.

"Come along o' me," he said, dragging them toward the house, and occasionally knocking their heads together.

In spite of their struggle to release themselves, Miffins succeeded in dragging them to the library, and finding that the doctor was out, he locked them in.

"We're in a pretty fix now," groaned Tinkle, as Miffins slammed the door and noiselessly turned the key in the lock.

"Can't we jump out of the window?" suggested Bob.

"Too far from the ground," returned Tinkle, opening the window and looking out.

They had spent about a quarter of an hour in looking out of the window when they saw the Diddler.

He was being lowered to the ground by his comrades on the roof.

"What a pity the rope doesn't hang over the window," said Bob; "it is quite fourteen feet away from the ground."

"I'm coming down to help you," cried the Diddler, nodding to them. "I never desert a friend—not if I know it, my boys."

"I don't see what you can do," said the desponding Tinkle; "you'll only get copped yourself."

"Don't be down in the mouth," cried the Diddler. "I'll soon have you out of that, dear boys."

He had now reached the ground, and was untying the rope.

Disappearing for a moment, he returned with a ladder and placed it against the window.

"Have you got the grub?" asked the Diddler, when Tinkle and Bob Fairfit had descended the ladder, and were standing by his side.

"It is in the outhouse," returned Tinkle. "Oh, Diddler, we have had such an adventure."

"So have I," returned the Diddler; "narrow escape—so on—took the doctor's grub—fat boy stole it—ran him off the roof—he wouldn't untie the rope—set him free—tied the rope round my own body—felt hand on my arm—looked round—saw Miffins—kicked his shins—gave Pickwick the signal—up I went—Miffins hanging on behind."

"We know the rest," cried Bob Fairfit.

"Let's get up on the roof," cried Tinkle.

"We must see after the grub first," returned the Diddler, making for the outhouse.

Tinkle and Bob Fairfit followed him.

The Diddler opened the door of the outhouse and looked in.

"This is too bad," he cried, angrily.

He saw the fat boy sitting in a chair, admiring a huge German sausage.

"And to think we saved that sausage from Belcher for this," cried Tinkle, in great grief.

"Would you believe that the world held such a greedy beast?" said the Diddler, addressing his two friends. "Must pay him out for this—'pon honor."

The fat boy spoke not.

He was putting the sausage down with all speed, fearing that it would be taken from him.

"We must serve him out another time," said Tinkle. "Miffins might pounce upon us at any moment."

The Diddler assented. They carried the parcels out and tied them to the rope.

Young Pickwick and his friends on the roof worked away with a will, and the parcels were speedily detached from the rope.

It was lowered again, and the three boys were drawn up in quick succession.

Tinkle looked with no little surprise at Mossy, who was busily engaged in cleaning out a large stew-pan.

"Coming out in a new character, eh?" cried Tinkle.

"Don't you give me any of your chaff!" returned Mossy, who had a large smut on his nose.

"Ha, ha, ha!" screamed Bob Fairfit; "glad to see you useful for once in your life, Mossy. But why make yourself in such a mess? You do look a dirty boy."

"Don't talk to him," said young Pickwick; "he's in disgrace, and has to do all the dirty work."

Mossy said nothing, but his red-brown eyes gleamed.

He went on cleaning the pan, and Pickwick and his friends turned away.

They entered the house.

Tinkle at once narrated the adventure that he and Bob had passed through during their absence from the school.

"It seems to me that Waddle and the heavy-eyed man are plotting together against the Diddler," he said, in confusion.

"This looks well for me," cried the Diddler. "I must be a real heir, or what need to plot against me, eh, Picky?"

Young Pickwick made no remark. He advanced toward the door and suddenly threw it open.

In tumbled Mossy Morton.

"Oh, Mossy!" exclaimed Dick, "am I to believe that you have been listening at the door?"

"I was not," began Mossy.

"There, hold your tongue," interrupted Pickwick; "you will only make matters worse."

"I will not hold my tongue," cried Mossy Morton, turning his red-brown eyes upon Pickwick, "for you or any one."

"You won't?" cried Pickwick. "Then here goes."

He sent Mossy flying out of the house and over on his back.

Mossy picked himself up and made a rush at Pickwick, who with his friends had left the little house.

At this moment Bully Mungal gave a loud cry.

All the boys looked down at the doctor's grounds.

Mr. Parrot was coming up the pathway with a ladder on his back.

"Hallon, Parrot, what's your game?" cried the boys.

Mr. Parrot was taken by surprise.

He looked up at the boys, and suddenly swinging the ladder round, broke one of the parlor windows.

"Here's a pretty fool!" cried Miffins, suddenly appearing. "Just you give us that there ladder."

Mr. Parrot obeyed, and Miffins hoisted it on his shoulder in a professional manner.

He walked briskly up the path, and planted the ladder against the house.

Before the boys could recover from their astonishment, Miffins had commenced the ascent.

Mr. Parrot cautiously followed.

"I'm a-coming, my lads!" yelled Miffins, shaking his fist at the boys who were looking over the parapet.

"Let's push the ladder away," cried Mungal, as Miffins steadily advanced.

He thought this suggestion would please his leader.

But Pickwick was enraged at his brutality.

"Do nothing of the kind," he cried.

"Why not?" cried Bully Mungal.

"Do you want to kill them?" asked Pickwick, angrily.

"It won't kill them, it will only break their arms or legs," said Mungal, with a grin; "and they'll think that the ladder slipped. Anyhow, I am going to do it."

"No, you won't!" cried young Pickwick, sternly. "If you try it on, you'll be sorry for it, I can tell you."

"Oh, all right," said Bully Mungal, sullenly; "let all the household come up. Here's the doctor now." Young Pickwick looked down, and saw that Doctor Waddle was standing in the garden.

"Oh, you bad, ungrateful boys!" cried the doctor, shaking his fist at them.

But he did not attempt to mount the ladder.

He valued his precious neck too much to run such a risk.

"Let's try the effect of a little cold water on Miffins," cried young Pickwick, taking no notice of the doctor.

The boys rushed to the garden engine and began working away with right good will.

But Miffins and Parrot would not go back.

"Give them a taste of this," cried Bully Mungal, taking up the pan of dirty water with which Mossy had washed the plates, and pouring it over their devoted heads.

Miffins and Parrot still held on.

They could not advance, and they would not retreat.

For some time the boys worked steadily at the garden engine.

But at last young Pickwick commanded them to stop.

"I think they have had enough," he said.

"So do I," said the Diddler; "but if we leave off they will come up."

"Let them come," cried young Pickwick.

The boys ceased working the garden engine, and Miffins recommenced the ascent.

"Let's push the ladder off while we have the chance," cried Bully Mungal. "You'll be sorry enough if you don't."

"Once again I tell you that I shall allow nothing of the kind," returned Pickwick.

In another moment Miffins and Parrot were on the roof.

"You wanted to push that there ladder away and break my legs, did yer?" cried Miffins, rushing at Bully Mungal.

He had overheard that young gentleman's remarks.

"I was only joking," cried Bully Mungal.

"Then I'll joke, too," said Miffins, giving Bully Mungal a blow over the shoulders with his knobby stick.

"I'll eat my wig if it doesn't serve him right," observed Parrot, also attacking Mungal.

"So it does," cried the boys.

They had little sympathy with Bully Mungal; his brutality sickened them.

Miffins gave the knobby stick to Parrot, while he held Bully Mungal down in a convenient position.

Parrot laid it on with a will, and Bully Mungal bellowed like a bull.

"Now is our time, boys," said Pickwick. "Get two pieces of rope and make slip-knots at the end of them."

Dick and Diddler obeyed without question.

"Now go behind Miffins and Parrot," said Pickwick, "and throw the ropes over their heads."

This was done, and Miffins and Parrot were prisoners, with their arms pinioned.

Miffins raved like a maniac.

"I'll make you wish you had never been born," he yelled.

He could not shake his fist at the boys as he uttered this threat.

The boys, with one accord, burst into loud laughter.

"What are you laughing at, yer apes?" cried Miffins.

"I'll eat my wig if ever I had such an indignity offered to my person before," said Mr. Parrot. "My nose itches and I can't scratch it."

"I'll soon remedy that," said Bully Mungal.

He was about to dash his fist in Parrot's face, when young Pickwick caught his arm.

"Would you hit a man when he is powerless?" cried Pickwick, indignantly.

"Yes, I would!" said Bully Mungal, trying to push Pickwick aside. "And so would you if Parrot had given you such a taste of that knobby stick!"

"Not with his arms tied," returned Pickwick.

"Oh, wouldn't you?" said Bully Mungal; "I know better."

"I don't want to discuss the matter with you," said Pickwick, turning his back upon the bully. "Boys," he cried, "just draw up that ladder."

The order was obeyed.

"But what's to be done with Miffins and Parrot?" asked the Diddler. "Can't keep 'em here—want too much grub—'pon honor."

AN OUTLINE DRAWING LESSON FOR OUR YOUNG FRIENDS.—LEARNING THE TIME.

THE JANITOR'S BOY.—"'HULLO, BOY,' SAID ONE POLICEMAN; 'YOU'VE MADE AN EARLY START.' 'I HAVE THAT,' SAID VANDY. 'BUT THEY'RE PRIME GOOD APPLES.' 'LOOK LIKE IT,' SAID THE MAN IN BLUE, AS HE HELPED HIMSELF TO ONE.'

"At present they are prisoners of war," said Pickwick. "I have not yet decided what is to be done with them."

"We are not going to have them here long," said Dick; "it would spoil all our fun."

"Pitch 'em over the parapet," suggested Bully Mungal.

"Oh, don't do that," cried Mr. Parrot, whose wig was all awry. "You wouldn't kill us, I am sure."

"Your lives are not in danger," said Pickwick; "but I tell you plainly that we mean to serve you out for your treatment of the Diddler."

And young Pickwick walked toward the little house, beckoning to the boys to follow him.

They did so.

"Let us hold a council of war," said young Pickwick. "What shall we do to those men? Diddler, speak up."

"My idea is this," said the Diddler, and he unfolded his plans to his friends. They listened attentively.

"It isn't half bad, if we manage it," observed young Pickwick. "And we'll try it."

The boys procured a long pole and tied a rope round the centre.

They then bound Miffins and Parrot at either end of the pole.

"What are you a-going to do with us?" cried Miffins. "I'll be hanged if I don't pay you for this, my larkers!"

"Don't be too curious," cried the Diddler—"sinful failing—very."

Hastily cutting the wings from a couple of geese which had been abstracted from the kitchen unpicked, the Diddler fastened them upon the shoulders of the two men.

"Birds of a feather flock together," he cried.

"Does anybody object to Miffins and Parrot being treated thus?" asked Pickwick.

"None."

"Then here goes!" cried Pickwick, helping to lower the two men over the parapet.

They dangled in mid-air, first one bobbing up and then the other.

"See-saw," cried the Diddler, working away at the crank with his comrades. "Really, you must quite enjoy it—make you feel like boys again—pleasant—very."

"Oh, if I only had your head under my arm!" yelled Miffins.

"Pray keep cool if you love me," cried the Diddler.

"Oh, this is more than I can stand!" cried Mr. Miffins, literally dancing on nothing.

Suddenly the boys heard the sound of wheels below.

Looking down, they saw a fire-engine coming up the carriage-drive.

"Why, the house must be on fire," cried Tinkle, nervously. "We shall all be burned to death!"

But a second glance dispelled this idea.

Tom Ely was sitting on the engine, while the doctor walked about the grounds in a perfectly cool and collected manner.

"The house isn't on fire," cried young Pickwick. "Just look at Waddle. Would he take it so coolly?"

"Then what's up?" said Tinkle.

"Perhaps he means us to have a ducking," observed Pickwick.

"Boys," said Doctor Waddle, waving a flag of truce, in the shape of a large white pocket handkerchief.

"Well, what do you want?" said young Pickwick, answering for the rest.

"Will you come off the roof, like good lads?"

"Not yet," said young Pickwick, as his chums danced Miffins and Parrot up and down.

"Oh, them beasts of boys," yelled Miffins.

"I'll eat my wig if I don't pay them out for this!" screamed the indignant Parrot.

At this moment Tom Ely jumped off the fire-engine, and the men began pumping up water at a great rate.

"This is pleasant; keep it up," cried Pickwick, as the water played upon the roof.

"What are you a-doing of?" yelled Miffins. "You are a-wetting me instead of the boys!"

But the noise of the fire-engines drowned his voice, and the doctor commanded the men to keep on pumping.

The boys, their first surprise over, began to work the garden-engine.

"That's the way to do it," said young Pickwick, exerting all his strength.

Between the fire-engine and the garden-engine Miffins and Parrot were speedily drenched with water.

They presented a sorry spectacle.

Tom Ely drew the doctor's attention to the condition of his guests.

Waddle immediately ordered the men to leave off pumping, and he again waved his white handkerchief.

"Well, what is it?" asked young Pickwick, looking over the parapet.

"Let Miffins and Parrot come down, and we will leave you alone," cried the doctor.

"Will you take that engine away?" asked Pickwick.

"Yes," said the doctor, ordering the firemen to beat a retreat.

The boys then rapidly lowered Miffins and Parrot to the ground, and Doctor Waddle speedily released his guests.

He then looked up at the boys with a sardonic smile.

"Come, my men," he cried, addressing the firemen, who were preparing to depart, "pump away and you shall be rewarded."

The boys looked at each other.

They were not prepared for such a treacherous act.

"We will serve him out for this," cried young Pickwick, as the water once more played upon the roof.

He rushed to the garden engine, and with the aid of his chums sent a stream of water down an adjacent chimney.

Mrs. Hardtopp speedily appeared in the grounds.

"Here's a pretty go!" she cried, angrily addressing the doctor. "Do you want to spile the drawing-room carpet?"

Doctor Waddle ordered the firemen to desist.

"Boys," he cried, "will you leave off pumping water down my chimney?"

"When you send the fire-engine away and not before," cried young Pickwick.

"Take the fire-engine away," said the doctor, giving the men some money.

He then angrily entered the house, and left his pupils masters of the situation.

They were delighted at the victory they had obtained.

(To be continued.)

"Young Pickwick's Schooldays" was commenced in No. 662.

Distinguished Scholars of Brooklyn (N. Y.) Schools.

THOMAS N. MYRICK,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 3, BEDFORD AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

THOMAS N. MYRICK is an intelligent boy who was recently presented to us at Grammar School No. 3, Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. He is a member of the junior division of the first class, and bears a high reputation for scholarship and good conduct. He was born in Brooklyn, October 2d, 1864, making him fifteen years of age. He is the son of James R. and Elizabeth Myrick. He first attended a private school, and six months later entered a class of the fifth grade in the Primary Department of his present school. Since that time he has been a diligent and improving pupil in each class that he has entered. He is a boy of a frank, amiable disposition, of truthfulness and honor, and of a naturally intelligent mind. Hence his teachers have found good materials to work upon, and he has energetically responded to all their efforts. He is attentive in learning from the books, and attentive in listening to all explanations. From examination to examination he shows the most satisfactory improvement. With a clear understanding of all the branches, he was reported to us as standing highest in grammar and mathematics, a fact in itself which is excellent proof of his ability. He has a pleasant face and polite manners. All who know him admire him, and it is his greatest aim to imitate the wise and good.

THOMAS N. MYRICK, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 3, BEDFORD AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

EMMA HONEYWELL,

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EMMA HONEYWELL is an intelligent and prominent pupil of the junior division of the first class of Grammar School No. 3, Bedford Avenue, corner of Jefferson Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y. She is the daughter of Ezekiel and Caroline Honeywell. She was born in Brooklyn, February 7th, 1865, and is therefore fourteen years of age. She studied at home until she was twelve years old, when she entered the first class of the Primary Department of No. 3. She has never been in any other school, and she can be traced from class to class and department to department by a record which is without reproach of any kind. Naturally intelligent and ambitious, she has always devoted herself to her studies, and reached success in every branch. She is light-hearted and cheerful, and perfectly ladylike in her manners. She imparts a beneficial influence to all with whom she associates, and is tenderly regarded by both teachers and classmates. Whatever she learns becomes at once a part of the culture of her daily life and intercourse. She grasps with the mind not to timidly secrete, but to apply and enlarge upon, and thus grow stronger in all that is useful as well as ornamental for woman's duties hereafter.

Grammar School No. 3 is an old and very successful school, with some fourteen hundred pupils. By reason of a painful illness, Henry W. Hayward, the former Principal, has been retired on a salary. The present Principal is B. Y. Conklin, formerly of No. 5, and one of the most accomplished teachers of the city or State.

EMMA HONEYWELL, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 3, BEDFORD AVENUE, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

THE JANITOR'S BOY.

A STORY OF NEW YORK.

By WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

CHAPTER XXXII.

PHIL and Sile found business dull that day, and time even hung a trifle heavily on their hands, but it was not so with the Janitor's Boy.

The morning had been busy enough, but the afternoon was more so, for several errands for Mr. Dunman were added to his other duties, and he felt that he must look in at his new establishment, if only to ask Señor Garcia how things were moving in the cigar trade.

The old Spaniard was not a very talkative person, and he had by no means made up his mind where to place Vandy, but he was the politest soul in the world, and quite ready to discuss cigars with his employer.

The latter found himself very much inclined to ask questions and to listen to the replies, and it is likely he picked up notions of that business pretty rapidly.

All he had heard and seen before, however, and all he was learning now, did not increase the interest he felt in the very mysterious character and operations of Mother Bounce.

"Poor? Not she. And she didn't make all her money off from that stand, either. I'll go wherever she sends me this evening, if it's only to see if I can't find out something. That's the only way I can do it."

The more he thought of it, the more impatient he became, and it was scarcely what could be called "dark" when he found himself once more on Mother Bounce's corner.

"Ye're early, Vandy. Didn't I say it was dark was to bring ye?"

"My legs did it, Mother Bounce."

"They're goods wans, thin. Do ye know where ye're goin,' the now?"

"No, and I don't care much."

"Don't ye? So much the betther, for it's mesilf that don't mane to give ye the worrud. It's yer eyes and yer ears ye must kape in workin' ordher, and put a clapper on yer tongue."

"What for?"

"So thim ye're wid won't have the idee that ye're green. It's the silent fool that gets the name of bein' wise."

"I'm a kind of a fool, then?"

"Not much, indade, but ye wud be av ye talked whin it was the good toime to whisht. Ye know ould McGuire, the boatman?"

"Of course I do."

"Well, ye've nothin' to do wid him, but ye'll go down to his place and there'll soon be a boat pull in for ye."

"How'll I know it?"

"Ye won't, thin. But it'll mebbe know yersilf."

"Will it speak to me, then?"

"Wid the wide mouth av it? Shut your own and listen. It's that fellow Dinis'll be in it, and no wan else, and you'll git in beside him or anywheres, and he'll pull away."

"Is that all?"

"D'ye think I'm a fortin-tiller or a clairvoyne, to go on with a longer sthory than that? The dark is comin' now, Vandy MacNamara. It'll be the black night on the bay. Saints purtect ye, me b'ye, an' I hope they've a kindly heart for a pore, lone woman that's plundhered entirely."

Vandy was getting used to Mrs. Bounce's queer flashes of pity for herself, and he hurried away toward the wharf where McGuire harbored his boats. It was a smart bit of a walk, and by the time he got there it was growing quite dusky, owing in part to the thick clouds which were drifting across the sky.

Vandy leaned against an iron-bound "snubbing-post" on the end of the pier, and stared out upon the gloomy water.

It made him think of some things he had read of in novels, and he was just saying to himself, "I wonder what'll come of it?" when a yawl of very moderate size, pulled by one man, came suddenly out of the shadows to the north of him, was pulled with a strong, steady stroke till it came almost under where he was standing, and Vandy recognized the bronzed features and tangled beard of Denis.

"A little nearer," quietly remarked Vandy. "I've only been here a few minutes."

"It's all right, then. I know ye."

Closer swung the boat, and the climb down was not a high one, for the tide was in.

Vandy's tongue was fairly itching with the questions he wanted to ask, but he held it resolutely, and Denis was the first to speak.

"It's all right, Vandy. I saw both of them this afternoon."

"Glad of that," said Vandy.

"It's a fine lot, this time. The steward picked 'em out for one o' them big bankers on Wall Street."

"Won't he miss 'em?"

"Not he. It's what he gets that he'll pay for. Them bankers know how to count, I reckon."

"Pretty dark to-night."

"The better for us. The steamer'll have her anchor up by daylight, and now's our only chance."

Vandy wondered what he and Denis had to do with the anchors of steamers, but he stuck to his silence, and in a few minutes more Denis remarked:

"There she is. Slow and easy now. You'd better take the oars when we're close up. Put the head of the boat right at the cable. There's a good deal of swell, and I can grapple it better than you can. Then you let the boat slide along, pulling slow, till I hand it to ye."

"And what then?"

"Slip to the stern and tow, of course. Ye wouldn't pull it on board, would ye, in sight of the steamer?"

"I ain't a fool," said Vandy, as he took the oars, and Denis silently crept to the bow of the boat.

The cable of the great, black-sided Cuban steamship they were now so close to ran down in a line that showed how nearly "under foot" her anchor was.

"Steady, now; one more pull. Here, man!" whispered Denis, as he leaned forward with a long knife in his hand.

"I've got it. Back water."

"Keep away with that boat!" roared a hoarse voice from the steamer's deck above them.

"Ay, ay, sir!" cheerily responded Denis. "There's room in the bay for both of us."

But even as he spoke he handed Vandy the end of a small, tarred-rope, which he had cut loose from the cable it had been tied to, and the latter surrendered the oars in a twinkling.

"Keep yer hand down," growled Denis, "close to the boat. It may tow hard."

So it did, and for a moment Vandy feared the rope might slip through his fingers, as the boat rose and fell on the waves.

He wound it firmly around a pin on the gunwale as it slackened, however, and the boat moved slowly away; but not before a lantern was seen coming toward the side of the steamer.

"They've a sharp watch to-night," said Denis. "None of our fellows forward, I guess. Maybe they're ashore."

"We've got it, anyhow," said Vandy. "Going back now?"

"Of course. But we've a fair chance to be overhauled."

"What then?"

"Keep still, and have your knife out ready to cut it if I give ye the word to slip."

"I'll be ready."

It was all very queer and wonderfully exciting, and Vandy felt every fibre of his body tingle some ten minutes later, as a long, dark, swiftly-rowed cutter came sweeping out of the gloom, and Denis answered the hail of the police-sergeant by promptly backing water.

"Here I am, sergeant. Take a good look at me."

"It's you, is it, Denis? You're out for no good."

"Of course not. But I'm going ashore now. Ye don't know of a good thing for me this evenin', sergeant?"

The good-humored impudence of Denis was greeted with a hearty laugh, a lantern was raised, keen eyes inspected the inside of the yawl, and then:

"Empty, Denis. You'd better stay so, now I know you're out."

"But I'm goin' in."

"Go in, then. You'll make one trip too many one of these days."

"I've made that now, then. The trip that doesn't pay is one too many, sergeant."

But the police-boat had other business on hand, and quickly swept away into the darkness, while Denis once more plied his oars vigorously. It was slow work with a "tow" like that behind them; but before long they were again under the shady side of the pier they started from.

"What now, Denis?"

"We'll leave it hitched here till mornin', anyway. You'll be on hand with a barrow a little after sunrise, and I'll be waitin' for ye with the apples."

Twenty questions were on Vandy's lips, but he kept still, while Denis swung the tow around under the pier and fastened the rope of it firmly to an iron spike that projected from one of the piles.

"That'll do," he said; and then he slowly and carefully raised the prize nearly out of the water.

It seemed to be a sort of large india-rubber bag, or rather two of them, full of some goods that gave them a squarish look, and tied very tightly at the mouth.

"No water can get through all that," said Denis. "But then it does sometimes, and ruins everything."

"That's not our fault."

"Of course not, but it makes a bad job of a good thing. We must look out for our rough edges in the mornin'. I'm glad the barrow's big and deep. It'll be a heavy haul for a boy like you."

"I can work it."

"Not very far, ye couldn't. Or ye wouldn't want to, anyway. I'd half like the sergeant to know, some day, what a neat bit of a sell we played him."

"There was nothing in the boat."

"And there'd have been nothing towin', if he'd gone too far. He must have been in a hurry or he'd never have let us up."

"He couldn't arrest an empty boat, could he?"

"They'll arrest anything, if they're a bit suspicious. But they know I never do any harm. I'm careful about my character, Vandy."

The precise kind of care he was in the habit of taking he did not go on to explain; but Vandy clambered up on the pier and made the best of his way homeward, feeling that he had begun to learn something.

As he reached Mrs. Bounce's corner, that watchful dame was waiting for him.

"Did ye get it, Vandy?"

"It's there, all right, whatever it is."

"Thin, the big barrow 'll be standin' here, riddy for ye, in the mornin'. Sure an' it's a trisure you're goin' to be, Vandy."

"Can't say about that, just yet. But I'll be on hand in the morning. Good-night, Mrs. Bounce. It's time I was home."

"Good-night, thin, me b'ye."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE sun was not up, that next morning, ten minutes earlier than was Vandy MacNamara, and he slipped down stairs and out into the street without awakening his father or mother, or either of their seven blessings.

When he reached Mother Bounce's corner there was no need for him to look around for the "barrow."

There it stood, by the door, a two-wheeled handcart of the largest size, with a box much deeper than ordinary and with a "swinging foot" forward that dropped on a hinge, so that when it was let down the cart could stand alone.

"Why, it's almost big enough for a small horse. But I can pull it, unless there's too much put into it."

A second story window above him opened, just then, and a well-known voice remarked:

"Bring the apples roight here, Vandy, me b'ye, and back 'em ag'in the dure."

"All right," said Vandy, as he put himself into the cart-handles and hurried away with it.

The streets were almost absolutely deserted, except by the police and a few market-wagons, and nobody thought of interrupting a boy with an empty hand-cart.

When he reached the pier, that, too, was bare enough, though a bark had pulled in on the opposite side and fastened to it in the night. Her crew were asleep, now, and Vandy reached his destination unnoticed.

He had very little waiting to do, for Denis and his boat shot out from under the pier.

"It's nigh low water, Vandy; catch the rope, and I'll h'ist while you pull. We'll up with the barrel first."

Just an ordinary apple-barrel was that, and there did not seem to be anything else in the boat. It was no great job for a strong man and a boy to land one barrel of apples.

"Knock in the head of it, Vandy."

The barrel-head was out in a twinkling, and a fine array of very honest apples showed themselves.

"Is the coast clear, Vandy?"

"Not a soul showing."

"Up she comes, then. We must be quick about this."

The two large india-rubber bags were beside the barrel in no time, and their mouth-strings untied.

"Into the cart with 'em, Vandy. Flat on the bottom. They're all as dry and safe as bones."

Boxes of Havana cigars, just as Vandy had expected, and they filled the large box of the handcart two tiers deep, and one or two to spare, on top, in the middle.

"Now the apples, Vandy."

Up came the barrel, and its rosy and yellow contents were poured out over the more valuable freight below, till it looked as if that hand-cart contained nothing in all the world but apples.

"That'll do," said Denis, as he kicked the now empty barrel from the wharf into the water. "I'll get away as fast as I can. Tell Mother Bounce I'll see her before the day's over. It's a fine pull you'll have before breakfast."

Denis was gone in a jiffy, but Vandy agreed with him about the "pull" as he tugged along with that loaded cart. He was careful to avoid jolting places, for his load was heaped so high that there might otherwise have been too many lost apples.

"Hullo, boy," said one policeman; "you've made an early start."

"I have that," said Vandy. "But they're prime good apples."

"Look like it," said the man in blue, as he helped himself to one. "Where have you got to drag 'em?"

"Only to Mother Bounce's, up on Otter Street."

"Oh, the old apple woman that lost her money on stocks. I know her. Hope she'll make a good thing on that load."

There was nothing suspicious in a load of apples, on their way to a well-known apple-woman, and Vandy pushed along, wondering what could be done with him if the bottom of his cart should fall out, and the secret with it.

Nothing of the kind happened, however, but he had to stop for a rest now and then, and he met a good many more people than he had when he was coming.

He reached Mrs. Bounce's corner at last, and there was the door at the foot of the stairs wide open.

The cart was backed into position before any human being appeared, and then there was Mother Bounce with two large baskets.

"Over here, Vandy. It's the quick wurruk before us. Niver moind thim apples as drops. We can pick 'em up aftherwards."

The back of the cart let down on hinges, and scores of the fruit poured out on the ground, but no attention was paid to them.

Boxes of cigars at the bottom of each basket and a few apples on top was the rule.

"There's nobody to the fore now," said Mrs. Bounce; "but there's no tellin' how soon there may be. Up to me own rooms wid 'em."

That, too, was something like hard work, doing it in a hurry. But Vandy sprang to it, and it was a marvel how soon that cart was empty.

Vandy himself had no idea how many boxes of pure Havanas he had brought, until he saw them standing in a pile against the wall of that room.

"We'll get them over to the divan a few at a time, Vandy, dear. It's a hape o' money they cost."

"You bought them fair, then?"

"That I did. Do ye take me for a thafe? Ask Denis."

"But how did he get them?"

"Bought them of the min on board the sthamer. Wud they put thim where they did widout knowin' they would be kim for?"

"It isn't stealin', I know that, Mother Bounce, but there's something wrong about it."

"Sorra bit of it. The steward of the sthamer mint to smoogle 'em in widout payin' duties, and the b'yes have hilped him. Ave it's a sin to chate the Coostum House there'll be less for that same steward to answer for, rest his sowl."

Vandy was not so young that he failed to see through the thin reasoning with which Mother Bounce consoled her honesty.

The cigars may have been stolen in Havana, for all he knew, and the steward may have intended to smuggle them in, but somebody on the steamer had robbed him of them to sell to Denis, and Mrs. Bounce's title to the goods was only as good as Denis's, no better.

"And mine's as good as hers, now I've rooted it out," thought Vandy. "I must think about this. I believe Dunman would do it every time, but I don't believe old Ponnerby would."

He must have been a good judge of character for his age, for he had hit it exactly. With this to be added, that Dunman would not have done it if there had been, in his opinion, the remotest danger of being found out.

Just then the scattered apples had to be picked up, and the handcart put away near the store of the grocery from which Mrs. Bounce had borrowed it, and by that time Vandy had to hurry home for his breakfast and his morning work.

"I see it," he said to himself, an hour or two later, as he stood on the steps of Ponnerby & Co.'s and looked up the street. "A smuggler is a rascal and a vagabond. It's a game of cheat with some stealing in it. None of that for me. I'm going to be a merchant, one of those days, and I'll be an honest one, too, I will."

That settled the matter, and he took the earliest chance to have a word with Mother Bounce, as she sat behind her stand.

"Have ye come for a load, Vandy? Well, ye might as well go up an' get a couple o' boxes. Put plinty o' newspapers 'round 'em. Yer new sign 'll be done the day."

"I'll be glad to see it, Mother Bounce; but there's one thing I've got to say, right off."

"And what's that, Vandy?"

"I'll sell all we've got on hand, and I'll ask no questions where it came from, but I won't do any more crooked business."

"Ye won't, thin? Where's the crook in buyin' what's offered ye and payin' what's asked for it?"

"Just the crook I won't take, Mother Bounce. The men that take it find their way up the river after a while."

"Is it Sing Sing? Do ye mane the Pinitenshry? To think of ye sayin' that to a pore lone woman that's thryin' to get an honest livin'. I'd never thought that of ye, Vandy MacNamara. Oh, the day!"

"It's no use, Mother Bounce. I don't want any crossbars before my windows. They wear striped clothes up there. Shave their heads, too, and the feed isn't good."

"Oh, Vandy, Vandy! What wud Clip say to hear ye?"

"I'll leave it to Clip, Mother Bounce. I'll go right up, now, and tell her all about it, and see if she doesn't side with me."

"Is it till Clip? Howld on, Vandy, dear. Niver a wurrud. I'd die first. The darlin'. To think o' botherin' her wid it and she lame o' one leg and hilpless. It's the croole b'ye ye are. No, indade, ye won't breathe a brith to her. Mebbe it's a bit o' sinse there is in what ye're sayin'. Ye're young, yet, and I'd niver be the wan to spile yer moind."

"I won't smuggle, Mrs. Bounce."

"Thin don't. I'll niver spake of it till ye. But ye won't till Clip, Vandy, dear? Ye won't now, wull ye? Not a worrud?"

"No, I won't tell her, but these are the last cigars of this kind we want in our place."

"Oh, me! To think of the profits ye moight mek. And yersilf to throw 'em away!"

"Nonsense, Mother Bounce. Merchants get rich. Smugglers go to where they sing twice."

Mrs. Bounce made no further effort to argue the case, for she was half afraid Vandy would refuse to take the cigars on hand.

That was what he ought to have done, if he had understood the matter, but he was only a boy, and he had not solved all the problems of business morality. On the whole, he had done very well, for he had decided rightly as far as he knew. Older and better men do not get beyond that, and a great many do not get so far.

But Vandy MacNamara had made a grand step forward that morning. It is a positively splendid thing for a boy to meet a big temptation and overcome it.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE final meeting of the creditors of the late firm of Vance & Madderley took place, as had been expected, and Mr. Dunman was as good as his word.

Not a trace of the fugitive partner had been discovered beyond the bad traces he left behind him, and it was easy for Dunman to make out a very good showing for Vance.

There could not be any objection to setting him free from his debts, for he had given up everything, and there are few business men in New York mean enough to be hard on a ruined man like Vance, the victim of rascality and misplaced confidence.

The result was, therefore, that Vance found himself, at the end of it, a free man, able to go on and do business.

Nor was that all. Mr. Dunman plainly declared his satisfaction with "the course taken by his unfortunate friend," and his determination to help him further.

"Nobody need feel called upon to make any remarks," he said, "if Mr. Vance finds friends and capital for a fresh start. If they have any questions to ask, they can come and ask them of me."

That was quite enough for anybody. Dunman was believed to have money, and he was known to have "strong friends." So there was no surprise expressed when Vance, a few days later, reappeared "on the street," and seemed to have quite enough to do. Even some others of his former creditors followed the example of Dunman, intrusting Vance with orders and commissions, so that there was no danger but what he would be able to support his family.

Of course his gratitude to Mr. Dunman was unbounded, and he was never weary of sounding the praises of his friend.

He might well do so, from his point of view, for he was better off than if he had recovered and kept the entire sum stolen by Madderley.

And he? The forger, swindler, and fugitive?

Well, he knew too much to remain long in Havana. A perfect hiding-place could only be found in a larger crowd than that. He had some money left, and Europe is a very wide place.

So there he went, and, by the time Vance was once more busy with his new affairs, his old associate was vaguely wandering among new places and strange faces in the Old World, vainly searching for some line of business to take up when the dwindling coins in his pocket should all have dwindled away.

That was not exactly what he had counted on, but it was a good deal more nearly what he deserved.

A busy man was Dunman.

Considering what a dull Summer that was, he was a wonderfully busy man. And yet, for a while, Phil Hawkins and Sile Morgan scarcely found enough to do.

Sile was learning the ways of the city very rapidly, for he studied them day and night.

He studied modern languages, too, and bookkeeping, and Vandy MacNamara himself was not more sternly determined to "be a merchant one of these days."

"You'll have enough to do in the Fall," Phil told him, "after Mr. Ponnerby gets back. By that time, too, you'll know better how to do it."

"Guess I will, but how is it that Mr. Dunman keeps up such a steady grind, and we have so much sitting down to do?"

"That's a kind of a puzzle, Sile. He always had a good deal of private business. More than Ponnerby knew anything about. He used to send Vandy on most of his errands."

And then it occurred to them both at the same moment that it was odd for Dunman to have business which he wanted to conceal from Mr. Ponnerby.

Phil had thought of it before, and now he saw that even Sile Morgan had thought of it.

"It's none of our business, Phil."

"Of course not. The less we say about it the better."

"We don't know anything."

"No, and I don't want to know."

"No more do I."

And yet, pretty soon, they could not help knowing more.

Day after day found Vandy more closely confined to his tobacco business, and, it must be said, to his pleasant duties at the side of Clip's chair.

He was no longer available, therefore, as a messenger, and Dunman was compelled to fall back on the boys in his own office. He tried not to, at first, but more and more came to their share from day to day, until they had less reason to complain of idle time.

To be sure, they were generally the bearers of sealed notes, but they knew to whom they carried them, and were sure to talk the matter over on their way up-town at night.

"Looks," said Phil, at last, "as if he were taking a shy at almost everything—stocks, cotton, tobacco, grain. He's hitting around everywhere."

"And he may get hit," said Sile.

"That's what happen's sometimes. I notice one thing."

"What's that, Phil?"

"Not any of all this business shows on the books of Ponnerby & Co."

"Not on the bank-book?"

"Well, there is a good deal I don't understand there. The balance in bank never was so low when Mr. Ponnerby was home."

They were only boys, and they had a high opinion of Mr. Dunman. For all they knew he was operating with the sanction of Mr. Ponnerby himself, and then neither one of them felt like playing spy.

Of one thing they became more and more sure, as week after week went by, and that was, that if Mr. Ponnerby did not know what was going on he ought to be told by somebody.

Had Phil been a trifle wiser he would have taken counsel with his father at once, but Phil was not a talkative boy, and he had not a gray hair in his head.

The weeks were passing, truly, and Vandy MacNamara firmly adhered to his position about the smuggling, if, indeed, there had never been anything worse.

Now and then he had caught old Garcia looking at him with a queer expression, but he had never guessed what it meant. He had certainly never guessed of whom Garcia really purchased some very fine lots of cigars which came into the shop, to all appearances from well-known dealers of the highest character.

Perhaps Mrs. Bounce could have given him some information.

Vandy was daily getting the management of the business more and more into his own hands, however, including the buying as well as the selling, and Señor Garcia had already informed Mother Bounce that it would not do to try too many tricks on him.

"Won't it, indade? Well, thin, it's proud I am of the bye, and it's the foine man he'll mek, and I'll not let him put his fut in hot wather for you nor me. Do ye moind that, Misther Garshy?"

And as for Clip—well, the Summer days were getting brighter and fairer for her. With every day that passed after the first fortnight of stillness and caution the surgeon grew more and more confident of the entire success of his "brilliant operations."

The day came at last when she could put her foot to the floor and bear a little weight on it. Then it became safe to trust her on crutches, and Vandy almost went wild with delight as he walked beside her up and down the room, while Pen eyed them from his cage and filled the whole place to overflowing with a flood of triumphant music.

It almost seemed as if the merry fellow understood the matter and was trying to express his feelings.

Clip could not have found words for hers, nor could Vandy, either, for that matter, but Mother Bounce found quite enough for both of them.

"By-and-by," ventured Vandy, "you'll do without crutches."

"Yes, but they're beautiful now."

"And you'll jump and dance."

"It seems as if that would be too much to hope for. The doctor says I mustn't try to do too much."

"It's the doctor says it!" exclaimed Mother Bounce. "Ye'll moind what he says, thin. What ave he had to coom agin wid his tools and murdher ye wance more? Ye'll be careful of that fut, Clip."

"Now, grandma! I won't do a bit too much. Hasn't the poor thing suffered enough?"

"Dade, an' it has, thin, and ye're an aingil, but it's little ye know of the ways of the worruld. An' Vandy's a foine by'e, an' he'll be a good friend to ye whin the owld woman's gone."

"But you're not going, grandma?"

"Sure I'm in no hurry, dear. It's plazed I am wid me prisint situashin."

"You may live a hundred years yet," suggested Vandy.

"What! A hundred years, is it? An' tind an apple stand all that time? Sure I'd a'most rather be in Hiven."

Whether she had a notion of tending stand in the latter place she did not say, but it is likely her ideas on the subject were a trifle vague.

[To be continued.]

"The Janitor's Boy" was commenced in No. [illegible]

How to Make a Model Beam-Engine.

(Continued.)

WE will now leave the cylinder for a short time and proceed to make the steam-box. This is generally in most model steam-engines square, or rather oblong, but this shape is not necessary, and as you cannot well make a square steam-box, we must make one out of a small pipe, which will do quite as well; it must be about 1⅛ inches long by half an inch wide; we have said about, as the exact size is not imperative. Having procured a piece of pipe for our steam-box, we must make the side-valve, which is represented in Fig. 3, and a side view is also given in Fig. 2. The best way to make this will be to place our steam-box, or rather pipe, on an old shovel, or something flat that will not be injured by the heat, and then to run some melted lead in it till about three-quarters full; while the lead is in a liquid state you must insert the rod L, so that when the lead cools it may be firmly fixed to it. On withdrawing the lead it will resemble a very long piston; you must, however, file it into the shape required (see diagram and also Fig. 2). The dotted lines show the portion to be filed away. The length of the valve-rod, as will be seen by referring to Fig. 1, is very short, and is joined to the lever K. The exact length you had better judge for yourself when you put the various parts of your engine together; always remembering, however, to keep your rods and shafts somewhat longer than is really required, as you can easily shorten, but cannot well lengthen, them. As the lead was run into the steam-box, or rather pipe, while in a melted state, the side-valve will of course fit accurately.

FIG. 3.

We now have our cylinder and steam-box so far ready; we must, however, before we proceed further, solder a piece of brass properly filed to the ends of both, making a hole through the centre of two of them, in order for the rods of each to work, and our cylinder, etc., is finished. We have now to

join them together, and we must again refer you to Fig 2, in order to show you the two secured to each other. You will see by consulting the diagram that there is a small space between them; this must be filled up with solder. You must, of course, previously make the holes O and P in the side of your steam-box, and when the solder is ready you must bore a hole through it at M (see Fig. 1), in order to meet the exhaust-pipe, which is also represented by the same letter at Fig. 2. If you choose to go to the extra trouble you would make a better job, as far as appearance goes, if the space between the two consisted of a piece of brass, the necessary holes in it being made and then soldered between your cylinder and steam-box.

We have now the stand, the two beams, cylinder, etc., ready. The next part to be made is the fly-wheel O, and the two supports JJ. A side view of your engine on a reduced scale is given in Fig. 4.

O is the fly-wheel, AA its shaft, which consists of a piece of stout wire, bent so as to form a crank at E, JJ its two supports. The fly-wheel can be made

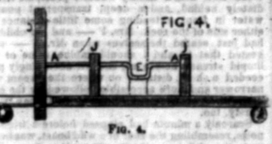

FIG. 4.

out of a piece of oak or other board, on which you must describe a circle with a compass, and then cut it out with a small saw. A metal wheel is, however, much preferable, as it gives the engine a more workmanlike and finished appearance. You can easily make one by filling a small box with a mixture of sand and clay, and then cutting the shape of your wheel out in it, after which you must run some melted metal into your mold. Of course the wheel will be somewhat rough when you take it out; you will therefore have to file it smooth. Within, of course, reasonable limits, the larger your fly-wheel is the better.

We have now to make the two supports JJ. A full view of them is given in Fig. 1. The lower part of the two supports can be made of wood, firmly fastened to your stand in the position shown, but the part through which the shaft of the fly-wheel passes cannot of course be made of the same material, as it would soon be worn by the constant friction. C, Fig. 5, shows you the upper part of one of the supports; E is a piece of brass, which you must file in the shape represented, one end being firmly fixed in your support, and the other having a hole bored through in order to receive the shaft. The hole must not be too small, as that would much impede the working of your engine; nor yet too large, so as to give a loose motion to the same. We will now fix these parts, before doing which, however, you must cut a small niche in the corner of your stand, in order to make room for the fly-wheel (see Fig. 4). You can now fix the large beam CC in its position, after which the next thing to be done is to make the rod H, which connects the end of the beam with the shaft with the fly-wheel. This must be cut out of some hard wood, such as oak; the end that is joined to the beam must be shaped in the form of a prong (see A, Fig. 5. B is the end of the beam, and D a small piece of wire which joins them together. The other end of the rod which is attached to the fly-wheel shaft is also represented at F, Fig. 5, a small piece of brass being filed in the same shape as that for the supports, and secured in the same way.

FIG. 5.

You have now to fix the cylinder and steam-box to your stand. The exact position you must judge for yourself. You had better fix it only temporarily at first, as you can easily secure it after you have found out its right position. We must now join the piston-rod to the beam by means of a small piece of oak, shaped similar to that by which you secured the end of the rod H, and which is represented in Fig. 5. If you now give your fly-wheel a slight turn you will set your engine in motion. If you find the piston works at all stiffly or appears out of the perpendicular, you may be sure that your cylinder is not in its right position. By slightly shifting it about in the direction required you will soon discover where it ought to be placed, then carefully mark it with a lead pencil. You must now fix the lever K, and secure the rod FF to it in precisely the same manner as you have the others. The end of the valve-rod must, however, be carefully bent round, as there is not room for a prong, and your engine is finished. The following will be found of great assistance in determining the relative distances and positions of the various parts. The measures are taken from a line drawn across (not lengthways) the centre of the stand AA: from the centre of the stand to the centre of the cylinder, 3⅝ inches; to the centre of the support J, 3¼ inches; to the axle of the lever K, 2⅝ inches. The following are taken from the axle of your large beam: To the rod H, 3⅝ inches; to the rod FF, 1¼ inches; and to the piston-rod NN, 3⅝ inches.

You will, of course, require a boiler. You can make a famous one out of an old kettle by soldering the lid securely down, and placing a safety-valve in the same. To make the safety-valve you must bore a small hole through the top of your boiler a trifle over an eighth of an inch in diameter; over this you must securely solder a short piece of pipe or tube somewhat larger in diameter than the hole. You must now carefully file a piece of brass so that it will fit nicely and evenly in the tube; this must be kept firmly pressed down by means of strong watch or spiral spring. When the steam is too strong in the boiler it forces the piece of brass up, and thus escapes.

Rob Rollalong, the Runaway.

By BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG,

AUTHOR OF THE "JACK HARKAWAY" AND "DICK LIGHTHEART" STORIES, ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XX.

[Continued from page 31[illegible].]

MEANWHILE, the professor touched Vangs on the shoulder. "You have not introduced me to your friends," he exclaimed, pompously.

"Really, I am not acquainted with this gentleman," answered Vangs, pointing to the doctor.

"Doctor Ames, of the wrecked ship *J. B. Astor*," answered the doctor.

"Ah! ship's doctor—Ames. I am Vangs, late ——"

"I've heard of you," interrupted the doctor, in a significant tone.

Vangs cowered before the look he gave him.

"Heard nothing bad, I hope," said Vangs.

"Nothing good, you bet," replied the doctor.

"Ah, pshaw! you save a man's life and then you open on him along the whole works. What way of doing biz is that?"

"But you're a bad man, and I——"

"Oh, pull down your vest!" cried Vangs. "Give us a pause on that. If you listen to what a couple of wrong-headed boys say, no one will believe you when you want to tell the truth."

"My dear sir," exclaimed the professor, "I am anxious to be introduced. Will you give Captain Vangs a chance? The poor man is miserable enough. He had embarked all his fortune in the ill-fated ship *Destiny*. It is wrecked. The fortune is like a mushroom—here to-day and gone to-morrow. We have been the captives of savages. They have fattened us on rice and corn, stuffing us like turkeys for Thanksgiving. I have gained twelve pounds in as many days."

"Who are you, sir?" asked the doctor.

"Professor Tode Stoole, of the Philadelphia Society for the Further Propagation and Development of Edible Fungi. If you were a fungus, sir, I would propagate you. I would develop you, and serve you up as a Centennial dish."

"Thank goodness, I am not likely to come under your careful consideration," answered the doctor.

"It is not often you meet a man like me," said the professor.

"Well, no; it is not an every-day occurrence."

"They wanted me to take office at Washington," continued Professor Tode Stoole; "but I told them I loved my art and my profession, and that I would never leave the beautiful studies of nature for the barren occupation which the holder of a political post entails."

"The country ought to be grateful to you, I'm sure, Mr. Tode School."

"Stoole, sir. Allow me to correct you."

"I stand corrected," replied the doctor.

"Have you been able to build a house here?" asked Vangs.

"Oh, yes; we have a fine castle of our own—one that we have discovered to be the ruins of Robinson Crusoe's famous abode."

"Is that so?"

"Undoubtedly. We put it in repair, have all the ship's stores inside, and make out very comfortably, under the circumstances."

"May I ask you one question, doc?" exclaimed the professor.

"Certainly, Mr. Tode Spoole."

"Stoole, sir."

"Beg your pardon. I shall have to sit on you or I shall never remember your name."

"Have you any fungi, sir, on the island—edible fungi?"

"I haven't seen any."

"Dear me! what an absurd island not to have any fungi! If I had a cake or two of mushroom spawn, how nice it would be!"

Kedge now came up with two poles he had cut.

"This is the best I can do for you," he exclaimed, as he presented the crutches to Vangs.

"Thank you," replied the cripple, taking hold of them and rising to his feet.

"I suppose," he added, to the doctor, "that we may share your house and your good things?"

"Wait a bit," replied the doctor, "until I consult with my young friends here."

"What have they to do with it?"

"They have their say. Rob, shall we take Mr. Vangs and his friends to the castle?"

Rob quitted Hattie's side and replied:

"We will take the young lady, sir, who says that she has no wish to remain with them; but as to Vangs and the other chap, if they go into the castle, you and I dissolve partnership. So you may take your choice." This was bold language.

Doctor Ames looked inquiringly at Kedge.

"I am quite of Rob's opinion, sir," exclaimed Kedge. "Mr. Vangs and I have sailed together. I know him to be a villain, a thief and a murderer, and I don't wish to have anything to to with him. We can't sail in consort—that's certain."

"You hear what the boys say?" remarked the doctor.

"My dear sir," exclaimed Vangs, in much alarm, "you have saved our lives only to let us perish of hunger and exposure. We must live."

"I don't see why you should," said Rob.

"I'm not talking to you, boy. I was addressing your superior."

"We're all equal here."

"Anyway," continued Vangs, "what are we to do? I'm a cripple. We have no arms. Will you give us a gun and powder and shot?"

"Certainly not," answered the doctor.

"Kill us out of the way at once."

"You can stay here to-night. Sleep under a tree; there are no snakes or wild beasts to molest you, neither are there savages. To-morrow we will give you something to eat. You can gather oysters and turtles' eggs, and kill the turtles themselves on the shore. There are cocoa and bread-fruit trees, and plenty of grapes, so that you need not starve. All we decide upon is this, we will have none of your company."

"Is this final?" asked Vangs.

"It is. Hattie goes with us," said Rob, who took upon himself to answer this question.

"Well," exclaimed Vangs, "you're a very nice lot of fellows to be stranded with. Bless my cats if I wouldn't sooner be among savages than with my own kind."

Rob pointed to the shore.

One of the canoes in which the cannibals came over in had been left on the beach, as its complement of men had been shot by the whites in the attack.

"There's a boat," he said. "If you want to leave us, we shall make no objection. Sail in as soon as you like."

Vangs gave him a vindictive glance, which boded him no good, and, indeed, Rob had very little mercy to expect from the malignant cripple, should he at any time fall into his hands.

"See here, doc," exclaimed Vangs. "Me and the boys had trouble; but you're a man and can feel for us chaps. Take us in, won't you?"

"I'll do no more than I've said I will," replied the doctor.

"That's a hard pill to swallow."

"Perhaps; but remember that you have a bad character. I should be very sorry to trust you in our house. You might take advantage of good nature and kill us all in the night."

"That isn't me, doc."

"I think it is. A man who has once done murder doesn't hesitate to do it a second time."

"Who says I ever killed a man?"

"You tried to kill me," replied Rob, "and we know you shot Soft Tommy."

"Who told you that lie?" demanded Vangs.

"It isn't a lie."

"I say it is, and you speak falsely when you repeat it," said Vangs, defiantly. "A joke's a joke, but you carry it a little too far when you try to take a man's character away in that shameful manner, my boy."

Hattie stepped forward.

"Mr. Vangs," she said, "I don't know where Rob Rollalong got his information, but he has spoken the truth, for I was with you when you shot poor Tommy, and you know as well as I do that that was the reason why you left Staten Island."

Vangs visibly changed color, and his brazen countenance fell.

"What do you want to go back on me for?" he asked.

"I take the side of truth and justice."

"Now you've met this snipe, I suppose you don't love me no more?"

"I do not."

"By Jove! you shall be mine!" shouted Vangs. "Cripple though I am, I swear you shall marry no one but me!"

Hattie smiled.

"I shall please myself about that," she replied; "and I hereby break off for ever the contract that existed between us."

"You do?"

"Yes, sir."

Vangs looked daggers at her.

"'Rah for Hattie!" cried Rob. "She is a stunner, and no half measure about that. Here's a song for you, Vangs. Listen to it, because it may do you good:

'There was an old seaman named Vangs,
Who, whene'er he dared, showed his fangs.
Each old salt shook his head
And most solemnly said,
He's not worth a cent till he hangs!'"

And Kedge took up the last line as a sort of chorus, singing, "He's not worth a cent till he hangs," adding:

"That just hits you off to rights, commodore. We've plenty of trees convenient, and don't you forget it."

Vangs scowled upon him, and saying, "Come on, professor. Let's quit; these chaps are worse'n savages," hobbled away on his crutches.

Professor Tode Stoole followed him with a crestfallen air, as he had hoped to enjoy the hospitality of the doctor, and when he saw comfortable quarters and a good meal, with a glass of grog to follow, growing smaller by degrees and beautifully less in the distance, he was cruelly mortified.

So ill-tempered was he that he did not think of the imminent danger he had escaped, and that had it not been for the doctor and the boys he would have found a tomb by this time in the stomach of a cannibal.

"Vangs, you're a fraud," he exclaimed.

"Don't call me names," replied Vangs, "or I'll knock you down with my crutch."

"I've been basely deceived in you. When I consented to go to China with you, I didn't expect to get wrecked, and when you met friends on this island, I didn't think they'd give you away so badly."

"Silence!" said Vangs.

"I shall not, sir. What are we to do for dinner?"

"Go and get edible fungi," replied Vangs, with a touch of humor, "and if you can't find anything to eat, put in a streak of lean; you're fat enough."

"Mr. Vangs, you insult me. I am the Professor of——"

"Mushrooms," put in Vangs.

"I am a man of education, sir, which it is very evident you are not."

"Now, what do you know? Nothing at all," said Vangs. "Come, I'll try you. Which is correct—7 and 5 *is* 11, or 7 and five *are* 11?"

"I should decidedly say 7 and 5 *are* 11," answered the professor.

"Gosh!" said Vangs, with a snap of the fingers, intended for triumphal derision; "when *I* went to school we used to say 7 *and* 5 *are* 12."

The professor saw he had been sold.

"I am the victim of a catch," he exclaimed. "This is childish. Cease this buffoonery. Had it not been for you, those worthy people would have taken me in. I wish I'd never left Jersey."

"I suspect you spent your time between Crow Hill and New Brunswick."

"In jail do you mean, sir?"

"Yes, I do."

The professor raised his fist and endeavored to hit Vangs in the eye, but the latter was too quick for him.

Raising one of his crutches, and balancing himself on the other, he struck the professor a blow on the back, which sent him tumbling on all-fours.

"High, low, jack, and the game!" cried Vangs.

But, to his surprise, Professor Tode Stoole did not show any resentment; he regarded the ground as if he liked it, and did not attempt to get up.

"You ain't knocked silly, are you?" asked Vangs, fancying he had seriously hurt him, and hoping he had not, as he did not wish to be alone in his misery. "Say, professor, you ain't knocked out of time, are you?"

"Hush up!" replied the professor, rubbing his back with one hand and feeling the ground with the other.

"What's the circus now?"

"I've found—yes, I've found a mushroom," replied the professor, holding up a round, white-looking thing, with a thick stem. "This, sir, is a mushroom."

"Edible?"

"I guess it is. To me belongs the honor of finding it. I thank you for that knock-down blow, because I know now there are eatable fungi on this island. I shall be able to make a glowing report to my society in Philadelphia when I return."

"When you do."

"To you, Mr. Vangs," continued the professor, unheeding the interruption, "shall belong the honor of eating the first mushroom."

"Eat that thing! I'm blest if I do. Poison yourself, and leave me out of the count," answered Vangs.

"Perhaps you'll be glad to eat mushrooms before long."

"How do I know it is not poisonous?"

"Because I say so, sir. Am I not the greatest naturalist since the days of Audubon, Buffon, Cuvier, and, to go further back, the great Linnæus?"

"Now, look at here," said Vangs: "if you badger me any more, I'll make you swallow that thing."

"I want no provocation, sir—none at all. Here she goes. Going, going, gone! How's that for high?"

The professor, as he uttered the last words, swallowed the "thing," after masticating it slightly.

"How's that for high?" he asked again, triumphantly.

"Oh, pull down your vest."

They walked on in silence for some little time, scarcely knowing where they were going, but hoping to come across some secluded, sequestered glade, where they could camp for the night, and go and search for the eatable delicacies, such as oysters, turtles and their eggs, together with grapes, of which Doctor Ames had so glibly spoken.

Nor were they disappointed, for they soon came to a lovely spot, not very far from the sea—a deep hollow invited repose, and a high rock, sheltered by brush, kept off any wind that might have annoyed them.

"We'll pitch here," said Vangs. "I'm terribly tired, and I don't think we'll find a better or more likely place to cast anchor if we tossed about for a month, so call all hands."

"All right," replied the professor, who had recovered his temper. "You stay there and I will go to the shore and see what I can find in the way of turtle-eggs, oysters, etc.; though, if the oysters can beat Dorlan, at Fulton Market, why, I'll eat them all the time."

"Git!" said Vangs, raising one of his crutches.

"Why?" asked the great Tode Stoole.

"Because I say so. You'd talk a Chinaman to death."

"Ha, ha, ha! Chin—Chin-a-man; Chinaman, good joke. You should have been end-man in a minstrel show, Mr. Vangs," laughed the professor.

Vangs hadn't intended to make a joke, and he was furious at his remark being construed that way.

Professor Tode Stoole walked to the beach and caught a turtle basking in the sun, which he turned on his back; then he stabbed him with his knife, smashed his shell and left him, while he went further in search of eggs and oysters. The latter he could not meet with, but eggs he found in plenty, and breaking a hole in one end he sucked the contents of half a dozen, and found them good.

"There's plenty of backbone in these eggs," he said to himself, as he filled his pockets with them, "and turtle eats good."

He carried the turtle he had killed, which was a fine fellow, weighing all a quarter of a hundred-weight, and arrived, panting and perspiring, at the spot where he had left Vangs.

The latter was not to be seen.

"Hello!" exclaimed Professor Tode Stoole; "where's that Vangs? He hasn't gone back on me, has he? No matter; I've got the grub, and if this turtle and its eggs don't make a bully stew, I'll sell myself for a cent on three months' credit. Vangs is a fraud, and——"

He had uttered the last words aloud.

Vangs, who had been on an exploring expedition during his absence, turned up at this moment, and raising his crutch with a threatening air, exclaimed:

"Who are you calling frauds?"

"Nobody," replied the professor. "I was talking to myself, and thinking of a friend of mine."

"Don't you insult me, or I'll——"

"Now, Mr. Vangs—old Vangs, old friend Vangs, if you will allow me to call you so—what's the use of your talking to me like that?" said the professor, in a tone of remonstrance.

"Look at here," replied Vangs. "I won't have any talk with the likes of you."

"Of me?"

"Yes."

"What have you got to say against me, Mr. Vangs?"

"You mean mushroom-raiser, I'll give you what Paddy gave the drum, if you don't watch it, and that mighty quick. I may be a cripple, but you don't perform on me. I'm not to be played for a fool."

"Mr. Vangs," said the professor, "won't you be still? I've got a turtle, and we'll make a fire and eat steaks. I've got egg; suck 'em."

He displayed a handful as he spoke.

"Oh, bother," answered Vangs.

"What puts you in such ill-temper, sir?"

"Ask no questions and you won't hear any lies."

"I see how it is. You've lost Hattie, and you're mad; but what's the use of your getting mad with me? I didn't take her away. Come, Mr. Vangs, be a gentleman, as I've always found you. Let's make all square and have a good blow-out. Here we are, dependent on ourselves for society, and if we can't enjoy ourselves, it's a pity. I'm sure I've no ill-feeling toward you; and I feel grateful to the Almighty for saving my life from those awful cannibals we were wrecked amongst, and who were going to eat us without salt."

"What?" growled Vangs.

"Without salt, sir. I shouldn't have cared if they'd got pepper and salt. What a day they thought they were having! Professor *rôti*; *jambon de* professor, *à la* King of the Cannibal Islands; *salmis de* professor, *à la* Hokey Pokey; *avec* mushrooms—what do the French call them?—*champignons*, I think; *tête de* professor, wanky fum fashion; professor's feet ——"

"Here," interrupted Vangs. "If the heathen could eat your feet they've got stronger stomachs than I gave them credit for."

"I disdain to reply," answered Mr. Tode Stoole. "I make allowance for you, and I will proceed to light a fire."

"How are you going to do it?" asked Vangs, leaning on his crutches in a surly and ill-tempered way.

"By rubbing two sticks together."

"That's the greatest fraud out. You bet it can't be done. Try it."

The professor got two dry sticks and rubbed and rubbed until his arms ached, but deuce a bit of a fire could he make, although he had piled up his wood high enough.

"It reads very well," said Vangs, "but it isn't so easily done—no, sir."

Finding it impossible to cook the turtle-steaks, upon which he had set his heart, and for which his mouth watered, the professor fell back on his supply of eggs.

"Here," said Vangs, "give us hold of some of those ovals. I'll have a suck. We can't starve if we have eggs."

He tapped and drained half a dozen, and felt better.

"Where are we to sleep to-night?" asked the professor.

"I guess I've found a place," replied Vangs.

"You have?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where may the location be?"

"Not far from here. While you were looking for turtles'-eggs I was prospecting, and I found a cave."

"A cave?"

AN ADVENTURE WITH BABOONS.

"Yes, sir; a big, dark-looking cave. But as I was alone and unarmed I did not go inside of it."

"Do you know where it is?"

"I do, and can find it easy, because I 'blazed' my way backward and forward, breaking twigs of trees and kicking over rocks."

"I begin to think that we have a great future before us," said the professor, gladly. "What with eggs, and a cave, and plenty of mushrooms, and, possibly, oysters, an American cannot starve."

"Let us go and explore the cave," said Vangs. "My head aches with the scare these savages gave me. We will sleep and think over our plans."

They put themselves side by side and walked along to the cave, which, as a shelter from the sun by day and the chill air by night, they hailed with acclamation.

"I'm not a hard man," said the professor; "far from it. But I feel bad when I think of the white men who refused to have us with them."

"They stole my gal," replied Vangs, scowling.

"Couldn't we attack them?"

"What with?"

"Certainly we are not armed, but if we could surprise them."

"How?"

"Watch them go out, or steal in in the night. They have a house or a castle. If we could take possession of that, and seize their arms, they would be our slaves, and have to work for us."

"Happy thought; book it," said Vangs.

"Shall we try it?"

"You can, if you like," exclaimed Vangs. "The boys hate me so much that if they caught me doing anything of that sort they would not hesitate to shoot me."

"I shouldn't like to go alone."

"Why not? They go out together, and you could sneak in and fire a gun as a signal to me, and I'd join you."

"I'll think it over."

"Don't do anything rash," said Vangs, "because I don't want to lose you. What would I do alone? You're good enough to quarrel with."

They had now reached the cave.

"Go in, professor; sail along," said Vangs, pointing to the dark, gloomy entrance.

"Let's go together," replied the professor, hanging back.

"I don't want the honor. You can gain it all. Show your courage. You were born under the Stars and Stripes. Jump around lively."

"Why can't you come with me?"

"I'm a cripple, and no good in a fight."

"You can hit precious hard with that crutch of yours," replied the professor.

"Sail in, I say. What are you afraid of? I thought you were genuine, I did; and now you're turnin' out to be bogus. What's the matter with you, professor?"

"There may be a wild beast inside."

"Don't believe the island raises them."

The professor was very reluctant to enter the cave, but at length his curiosity, and the constant bantering of Vangs, overcame his fear, and cutting a thick stick he boldly made for the entrance, though he was quaking with fear all the time.

It was very dark.

His eyes were not accustomed to the peculiar blue-black shade of light, and he proceeded very cautiously, groping with his hands, and putting out first one foot and then the other. He had not gone above a dozen yards before a heavy body struck him in the stomach.

For a moment he got a glimpse of two fiery eyes like those of a demon, and going head over-heels from the force of the shock, he rolled out of the cave on to the grass, before the astonished Vangs, who was quietly resting on his crutches.

"Say, professor!" he cried, "what's got you, that you come out of that cave so quick? I never see sich a fellow."

Mr. Tode Stoole only rolled on the ground, pressing his hands to his stomach and groaning in agony. Vangs leant on his crutches and laughed till his sides shook.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he continued. "Any one would think that you half killed yourself, you're so comical. What's got you?"

Scarcely had he spoken than a huge goat dashed out of the cave and butted him in the stomach, scattering him to the four winds of heaven, very much as he had done the professor.

Vangs's crutches went one way and himself another.

"Oh, by thunder!" he cried; "this is no joke. My word, I'm all to pieces!"

The professor had recovered himself by this time, and he got up, looking savagely at Vangs.

"Now, commodore," he exclaimed, "you know how it is yourself."

"Smash that billy-goat!" replied Vangs. "He's just knocked me out of time."

"Serve you right for laughing at me."

"Get my crutches, won't you, professor?"

"Get them yourself. I'm nobody's slave," answered Tode Stoole. "If I'm treated right, I act right, but I'm not going to be bounced by you, my festive fungus."

"Festive fungus!" repeated Vangs. "Well, I've lived to be called a son of a sea-cook, but by Peter I never thought I should live to be called a festive fungus, after being charged in the abdomen by a billy-goat on the rampage."

He crawled painfully on his hands and knees to get his crutches, but the professor relented and picked them up for him. "There's nothing mean about me," he said, "and I'll help you all I can, though a billy-goat in the stomach is no joke. I'd rather eat a poisonous mushroom, my very festive fungus."

"Don't call me that any more," replied Vangs.

"What?"

"Festive fungus. I don't like it."

"All right, my bold buccaneer. What's in a name? A rose would smell as sweet if you called it a stink-weed. Let us explore this staving old cave once more."

"That's good. Sail in, my boy. I'm right here, and if there are any more goats, I'll have a crutch ready," answered Vangs.

[To be continued.]

"Rob Rollalong" was commenced in No. 673.

ATTENDING a bawl—Minding the baby's cry.

Second Prize. First Prize. Third Prize.

OUR DRAWING TABLE.—SECOND COMPETITION.

Second Prize. First Prize. Third Prize.

OUR DRAWING TABLE.—THIRD COMPETITION.

ADVENTURE WITH BABOONS.

ABOUT twenty-six miles in a northwesterly direction from Port Elizabeth, Cape of Good Hope, stands a small country inn kept by a Mrs. C——, and much frequented by newly-wedded couples and residents of that part of the colony, in consequence of the salubrity of its situation and the shady, picturesque walks to be found in the vicinity.

In March, 1872, the writer accepted the invitation of Mr. F——, an American gentleman, to proceed to this romantic retreat on a visit to his family, who were enjoying a ramble in the country. During our brief stay, a stroll into the valley of the Van Standens was proposed, and accordingly Mr. and Mrs. F——, three children and myself, descended the side of a steep incline, and were soon wending our way through a rugged path in the woods below to the open bed of the river beyond. On reaching a mountain gorge through which the crystal waters of the Van Standens were listlessly trickling, our party, elated by the grandeur of the scenery, commenced wandering onward among the large boulders, anon watching the antics of numerous little conies on an overhanging "kraantz" (precipice), or responding to the mutterings of a tribe of monkeys ensconced among the trees on an opposite precipice, until a favorable spot for rest presented itself.

The place selected was a high piece of table rock, beneath the shade of an overhanging yellow-wood tree, with a thickly wooded precipice immediately behind, and a deep, transparent pool of water in front, extending some little distance on either side of the rock. Mrs. F—— and her children had just seated themselves when Mr. F—— suggested that he and I should imbibe some of the limpid stream before us, and we accordingly proceeded a short distance on where the stream was narrower and more accessible, followed by the children, who, of course, discovered that they were thirsty, too.

Scarcely a minute had elapsed before a frightful noise, resembling the roar of a wild beast, was heard from the cliff immediately above Mrs. F——, who remained alone on the rock. Naturally enough Mrs. F—— felt uneasy and called out to us. I happened to be nearer to her than the rest of the party, and rising up, I at once hastened toward the rock, trying to ease her mind by assuring her that the noise (concerning which I had grave misgivings myself) only emanated from one of the noisy tenants of the woods above. Before I could reach the rock I was satisfied that the roar had proceeded, not from a monkey, but from some huge baboon, probably one of the sentries stationed by these animals to sound an alarm on the approach of anything alive, as the signal was instantly responded to from all sides, while a whole tribe of these savage brutes descended the cliff with the speed of lightning, making the most hideous yells, which reverberated along the hillsides and rendered the effect doubly alarming. In less time than it takes to describe the scene, Mrs. F—— was surrounded by the hideous creatures, and placed in a situation of extreme peril. Mr. F—— and his little son tried to urge two dogs that had accompanied us to face the advancing squadron, but the dogs took fright and turned tail.

As I reached the rock, the leader of the gang, a ferocious-looking monster standing four or five feet high (probably the same gentleman who had sounded the advance) had arrived at the foot of the tree overspreading Mrs. F——, and was then not two yards off. Mrs. F——, almost paralyzed with terror, gave a shriek at that moment, exclaiming:

"Oh, good heavens! look at this wretch."

Unable to descend by the same way she had clambered up, I called to her to slip down on the water side and make use of my shoulder *en passant*, which she did, and in an instant she had alighted from her uncomfortable eminence some eight or ten feet above. While this little acrobatic performance was going on their baboonships were keeping up their satanic chorus all around, and it seemed as if they had fully made up their minds for an attack. There we were, in a pitiably helpless position—savage enemies in front, around and above; deep water immediately behind, and not a stick, stone, or weapon of any kind available as a means of defense. On one side of the rock a piece of wood cropped up, which I eagerly seized hold of, but, to my dismay, it was only a solitary, leafless stem, that had taken root in the crevices below, and refused to yield to all the force I could apply. I looked about me for some loose stones, but none were to be had, except by jumping to the other side of a pool of water.

There was no time for reflection, we were utterly helpless as we stood, the brutes seemed to be surrounding us; so I at once made a dash for the stones, taking up a position where I could act on the defensive, while Mr. F—— was energetically assisting the members of his family to scramble over rocks and pools round to the other side of the stream, which was accomplished with considerable agility, though to the discomfiture of boots and stockings.

As the distance between our party and these hideous wretches was widened, we heard a defiant chuckle from the leader of the gang, closely resembling

A BOY STOPS A RUNAWAY HORSE AND SAVES A CHILD'S LIFE, BY HANGING TO THE HORSE'S NECK.

the laugh of a human being. So long, however, as our charge was placed beyond the reach of danger, the commander-in-chief was welcome to crow over the retreat. My great regret was that I had not, as a precautionary measure, taken my gun with me.

There is no doubt in my mind that the presence and prompt interference of the two gentlemen restrained these enraged animals from declaring open war against the lady and her children, and that had either of us possessed firearms, we should in all likelihood have been suffered to enjoy, without molestation, a deep potation of that primitive element, which probably had not been tasted by either of us in its native purity for many a day.

These creatures are as watchful as they are sagacious, and the moment their haunts are approached, every movement is not only observed, but apparently communicated by means of monkey telegraphy to the rest of the tribe. At the time of this occurrence there had been a continuation of dry weather, and berries and other food were scarce. Hunger drove the tribe to commit depredations on neighboring gardens, for which one or more of their number had paid the penalty, and hence they had become unusually ferocious.

An instance of their ferocity when enraged was related to me by a gentleman who was an eye-witness of what he stated. A venturesome tiger in British Caffraria had seized upon some young hopeful of the flock (juvenile monkey-meat being highly prized by beasts of prey), and was proceeding to enjoy the delicacy, when a cry of lamentation was raised, and the entire tribe rushed after the tiger, determined upon vengance. They pursued him across a river, and after a brief combat the tiger was overpowered and literally torn to shreds.

A story is also told of a party of soldiers from one of the forts in the interior, who incautiously shot a monkey, and finding themselves assailed on all sides by hordes of ferocious baboons, were compelled to beat an inglorious retreat within the walls of the fort. This, however, savors of a joke, as a gun will invariably keep the creatures at a respectful distance.

A YOUTH'S RARE COURAGE.

A BRAVE lad has just performed a rare feat of courage, common sense, and presence of mind in Berlin in the presence of very few observers. A milkcart, containing no one but a little girl about three years old was being wildly dragged along the Muhlenstrasse by a furious horse, and no one dared to rush at the bridle of the galloping beast. A boy, apparently not more than thirteen years old, sprang forward, and rolled a large empty tub, which was standing at a shop-door, into the centre of the road. This brought the horse to an instant pause, and when he tried to pass at its side, the boy seized the bridle, and hung on, at the same moment throwing up his legs and clasping them tightly around the horse's neck.

This heavy burden at so unusual a place brought the terrified beast to a full stop, and the bystanders hurried up and lifted the little girl out of the cart. While all manner of questions and soothing speeches were being addressed to her, the hero of the action slipped away, no one knowing his name or dwelling.

THE WRECKER'S SECRET.

A TALE OF THE YORKSHIRE COAST.

IT was during the time when the encounters between the English and Dutch fleets were continually taking place, that Rob Rowlock, who lived on the rugged coast of Yorkshire, between Whitby and Scarborough, made his fortune under the guise of a poor, hardworking fisherman.

His son, a boy of fourteen, having no mother to love or care for him, and sick of the ill-treatment he received from his father, ran away to sea.

From that time the old man was never seen abroad, save when a destructive storm swept over land and sea; then, like a spirit of evil omen, he stood upon the highest point of the towering cliffs, undaunted by the scathing lightning, and chanting a wild invocation to the conflicting elements.

He shunned the society of his fellow-men, and from the day his son left home was never heard to speak; but, concealed beneath his rough exterior and brutal manner, he had a depth of rugged affection for his boy unknown to himself until he was left alone.

For the first time in his life he felt then a father's love, and he cursed himself bitterly for being the cause of driving the boy from him. His despair and disappointment took a strange effect upon his nature; he grew more savage and worse, having no faith and no fear; his only comfort was gold, he lived for that alone now, and worshiped it with an insane idolatry.

As he grew older, and his thirst for gold increased, his repugnance to crime grew less, if possible, and he went through dangers and sufferings horrible to himself in his endeavor to obtain it.

From his hovel, a sort of cave hollowed out in the upper part of the rocky cliff, not a ship that passed, except in the direst darkness, escaped his notice.

The Dutch at that time scoured the North Sea with their ships—their admiral, Van Tromp, carrying a besom at his masthead, as a boast that he could sweep the English ships from the face of the ocean.

The storm, which did almost as much damage to the Dutch men-of-war as the British ships did, scattered rich booties along the seashore, and old Rowlock found wealth in plenty, but not enough to satisfy his avariciousness; he stripped the dead bodies of every trifling article of any value, and cut fingers from hands to get the rings off.

Two or three poor fellows who had crawled up the rocks, and were more dead than alive from the sufferings they had undergone, implored the wrecker to give them protection; he answered with a savage laugh, and whipping out his knife, he foully murdered them in cold blood.

"There, you Dutch images," he chuckled, gleefully, as he rifled their pockets of their dollars, and ruthlessly tore the love-tokens from their necks, "these will gild your coach when it calls for you to take you up to heaven." Such were the unholy speeches of the cruel and sordid wretch.

But these were not the only means he employed to increase his ill-gotten horde.

When a strange vessel, no matter of what nationality, approached anywhere near the shore, he would go off in his boat, offer his services as pilot, and at the risk of his own life he would run the vessel upon the rocks.

But it seemed that his life was charmed, for whilst others perished he managed somehow to scramble ashore in his boat, and then carry on his foul work of plunder.

Then he returned home with his little bark heavily laden with his ill-gotten gains, but he never saw the greedy pair of eyes watching him as he staggered up up the jagged paths leading to his wretched hovel.

Neither did he see the dark, fierce face looking through the chinks while he stored his booty away in a large, iron-bound chest.

"So, so, Robin Rowlock," muttered the man, who, by his dress, belonged to the same fraternity as the old villain, "this is why you keep away from your old mates. That's a good haul, and I mean to go shares in it, or I'm one of your good-natured Dutchmen."

As he finished his sentence, the wrecker turned suddenly, as if startled, and blew out the light, and the spy jumped aside in time to avoid being seen.

THE WRECKER'S SECRET.—"HE WAS SO ABSORBED IN HIS REFLECTIONS, THAT HE SAW NOT THE STEALTHY FIGURE CREEP INTO THE ROOM."

"I'll have that treasure if I have to slit his wizzen for it," the spy muttered, as he turned away.

Judging by his look, he was a man not likely to break his word, if keeping it would be of any interest to him. He was known to be one of the most bold and desperate smugglers of the coast, a man who would as soon cut a throat as break the neck of a bottle; and rather lure some unsuspecting vessel to destruction than run the risk even of running a cargo of Dutch schnapps.

But he told not a word of what he had seen to his lawless companions.

He kept the secret of the wrecker's treasure to himself, and was almost afraid to think of it too much, lest he should betray it in a breath to his companions; he was greedy in his design, and meant to have the plunder at any cost.

He kept a vigilant watch upon the movements of the rascally old wrecker, awaiting an opportunity to effect the robbery when his back was turned. Rob was as courageous and powerful as a lion, and as ferocious in his anger. The intended robber knowing this, did not care about coming to close quarters with him under the circumstances he meditated.

For nearly three weeks the wrecker watched the house of his intended victim, but the old ruffian did not stir outside the door until one night when an appalling gale swept over the land with a violence that threatened to level all things to the earth; then he stole forth cautiously with a lantern in his hand.

The spy watched him out at night, and then tried to force an entrance at the door, but it defied all his efforts, and with a dreadful oath he went to the window. The fastenings were not so difficult, and with a small lever he soon forced it open. The shutters yielded easily, and with a hoarse laugh of triumph he sprang into the hovel.

The treasure-chest he found locked, nor could he force the lid, and he swore again; he then searched the place for the key, every corner and everything he ransacked, giving vent to his rage and disappointment the whole time in horrible invectives.

At last, pulling the things off the bench that served for a bed, he found a bunch of keys under the pillow, and it was not long before he opened the chest and discovered the wrecker's treasure, his eyes sparkling with avaricious joy as he stood looking over the rich booty.

There were articles of every description heaped together—silver and gold goblets, trinkets of intrinsic value and chaste workmanship.

Some of these were the spoils taken from pirate vessels, for Rob Rowlock served all alike.

The robber threw the things out with nervous excitement, and the deeper he went into the treasure-chest the more beautiful and precious things he discovered.

"Ah! gold!" he exclaimed, pulling out out a bag of bright sovereigns. "Gold, beautiful gold, that gives power and commands homage. Ha, ha, ha! By my soul, it were a pity, indeed, to let these riches be hidden—riches of a king's ransom. Ha, ha, ha! Robin Rowlock, grateful I am to thee for this treasure. I love thee better now than I ever did."

He was so absorbed in his reflections, so fascinated by the glittering dross, that he had forgotten he had left the window open.

He saw not the stealthy figure creep into the room; he heard not the light footfall behind him, and was unconscious of his danger until he found himself grasped by the throat in a grip like a vise.

"Foul fiend, would'st thou rob me of my gold?" cried a croaking voice.

Turning with a great start, he found himself in the power of the old wrecker, who glared upon him like a wolf, and held a long knife in his hand.

The robber dropped his bag of gold, and before the old man could raise his arm to strike, closed with him.

A terrible struggle ensued; the old man sustained his hold, and as they rolled about over the floor he struck his assailant a score of times with the knife.

Covered with gaping wounds, the robber fought madly, while his life ebbed away in streams of blood.

All the savage instincts of his nature aroused by the thought of losing his gold, the old wrecker fought with relentless fury. Even when his opponent lay stretched at his feet in death he plunged his weapon into the bleeding corpse with insatiable revenge.

"He would have my gold!" he laughed, looking like a demon in his fury; "had I not returned for the lamp the foul fiend would have robbed me. Ha! ha! his carcass will make food for the fishes."

So saying, he hurled the body out of the hole that served for a window, put back his ill-gotten gains in the chest, locked it, and put the keys in his pocket, then fastening up his house, he took a large lantern from the hook and dragged the body of his foe to the cliff and hurled it into the sea.

The storm was raging with mighty fury, and far out in the roaring surf a brave ship labored, fast going to wreck. The loud boom of the minute-gun was wafted over the ocean by the howling wind; but the old villain on the cliff laughed hoarsely at these appeals for succor.

Fastening the lantern to the end of a long stick, he swayed it about, in intimation of a ship rolling about on the rising billows.

The distressed vessel, deceived by this lure, made toward it and foundered on the rocks, when her timbers groaned and creaked like some human thing in agony.

There was no help for the crew—no hope of reaching land in that destructive tempest. The boats were no sooner lowered than they were capsized, and the poor fellows swallowed in the angry waves.

The ship was fast going to pieces, battered about by the wild elements, and groaned and cracked as she swayed about by the billows that engulfed her.

The old villain chuckled exultingly at the destruction caused by his foul work, and when the side of the good ship bulged out and disgorged her treasure he descended to the sea-shore to gather his spoil.

The inhuman old wretch stood and gloated over the rich booty that strewed the shore.

When the storm had somewhat abated, he launched a boat and pulled toward the wreck.

A low cry of help was heard, and he turned with a look of murder in his eyes.

Clinging to a piece of timber he saw a young man, and he made a sign to him, indicating that he would come to his rescue, but his intentions were far different.

He knew that if a soul lived he would be brought to judgment for his misdeeds, and he pulled toward the only survivor of the wreck to destroy him.

The poor fellow held out his hand to be pulled into the boat, but the wrecker struck at him and wounded him in the arm.

Uttering a cry of pain, the shipwrecked boy turned upon his distardly assailant a look that sent a shudder to the old villain's heart.

Enraged by the murderous attack, he scrambled into the boat, and wresting the knife from the wrecker's hand, he thrust it through his shoulder.

"Judgment!" cried the old man, falling back mortally wounded; "Fred! Fred! my son, you have murdered me."

During the struggle the boat gave a lurch, a big wave swept over her, and she went down, leaving the boy and his wounded father struggling in the angry sea.

But Fred was a good swimmer; he soon reached the rocks, and was about to hurry away, when the voice of his father caused him to remain.

TALES WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.— THE ISLAND OF ELBA.—SEE PAGE 334.

"Help! help!" cried the wretched man, and Fred sprang to his aid.

With some difficulty the boy caught him, and dragged him on to the rocks clear of the raging surf.

"Raise me, lift me, Fred, lift me," groaned the dying man. "I—I have something to say for your good."

Fred exerted all his strength to comply with his repentant parent's last dying wish, and raised him to a sitting posture, so that he might speak.

"Heavenly Father!" exclaimed the boy, in tears, "why was I so blind?"

"Fred! I forgive you, my boy," said the old man, with his parting breath. "Take these keys; in a chest in my room you will find wealth enough to make you as rich as a prince, should you live for a thousand years. Grieve not for me. When my spirit hath fled let the ocean receive my body. I wish it."

They were the wrecker's last words. As the moon struggled through the rifted clouds and fell on the pallid face of the wrecker, Fred saw that he was dead, and that he was fatherless.

The boy obeyed his father's last request religiously, for he loved him spite of all he had suffered through his cruelty, and had it been in Fred's power to have called him back to a repentant life, he would have willingly forgone all the pleasures he afterward bought with "The Wrecker's Secret."

Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

THE ISLAND OF ELBA.

OF course all our young friends must have heard of the great Napoleon, and therefore a short description of an island in which he was imprisoned for some months will be of great interest to them.

Elba is a small island, now belonging to Italy, from the mainland of which it is separated by the Strait of Piombino. It is about eighteen miles long, with an extreme breadth of twelve miles, and a population of some 20,000. The coast line is deeply indented by bays and inlets, so that in some places the actual breadth of the land is not more than three miles. The surface is very irregular, being traversed by mountains, some of the summits reaching the height of 3,000 feet. The soil in the valley is fertile, but only a small portion is under cultivation.

Much fruit is produced, and the oranges are very excellent. From time immemorial Elba has been celebrated for its iron mines. Near the eastern coast is a mountain, two miles in circumference and five hundred feet high, entirely of iron ore, which yields from fifty to seventy per cent. of pure metal.

The coast fisheries are very important, the principal products being sardines, anchovies, and the tunny-fish. The island has passed under several sovereignties. During the Middle Ages it was subject to various petty Italian princes and chiefs; and subsequently to Spain, Naples and Tuscany. In 1796 it was occupied by the British, but in the following year was ceded to France. By the treaty of 1814 it was erected into a sovereignty for Napoleon, who resided here from May 4th, 1814, to February 26th, 1815, when he left it only to meet his final overthrow at Waterloo. A villa occupied by him near Porto Ferrajo, the principal town of the island, has been converted into a Napoleonic Museum. In 1815 Elba reverted to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and in 1860 it was annexed to the new Kingdom of Italy.

CHRISTMAS GAMES.

(Continued.)

CROSS-QUESTIONS AND CROOKED ANSWERS.

THE company sit round, and each one whispers a question to his neighbor on the right, and then each one whispers an answer; so that each answers the question propounded by some other player, and of the purport of which he is, of course, ignorant. Then every player has to recite the question he received from one player and the answer he got from the other, and the ridiculous incongruity of these random cross-questions and crooked answers will frequently excite a good deal of sport. One, for instance, may say, "I was asked 'If I considered dancing agreeable?' and the answer was, 'Yesterday fortnight.'" Another may declare, "I was asked 'If I had seen the comet?' and the answer was, 'He was married last year!'" A third, "I was asked 'What I liked best for dinner?' and the answer was 'The Emperor of China!'"

CONSEQUENCES.

This is a round game, to play at which the company must be seated at a table. Each player has before him, or her, a long, narrow piece of writing-paper and a pencil. At the top of the paper each writes a quality of a gentleman. "The fickle," for instance, or "the insinuating," or "the handsome," "the ugly," or any epithet, in fact, that may occur to the mind at the moment. But nobody may see what the neighbors to the right and left have written. The top of each paper is then folded down, so as to hide what has been written, and each one passes his paper to his neighbor on the right, so that every player has now a new paper before him. On this he writes a gentleman's name; if that of one of the gentlemen in company, so much the better. Again the papers are passed to the right after being folded over; the beauty of the game being that no one may write two consecutive sentences on the same paper. *The quality of a lady* is now written. Fold, and pass the paper—*The lady's name*—then where *they met*—*what he said to her*—*what she said to him*—*the consequence*—and *what the world said*. The papers are now unfolded in succession, and the contents read, and the queerest cross-questions and crooked answers are almost sure to result. For instance, the following will be a specimen: "The conceited Mr. Jones (one of the company) and the accomplished Miss Smith met on the top of an omnibus. He said to her, 'Will you love me then as now?' She said to him, 'How very kind you are;' the consequence was, 'They separated for ever,' and the world said, 'Serve them right.'" Another strip, on being unfolded, may produce some such legend as this: "The amiable Lord Palmerston and the objectionable Mrs. Grundy met on the pier at Margate. He said to her, 'How do I look?' She said to him, "Do it;' the consequence was 'A secret marriage,' and the world said, 'We knew how it would be.'"

I LOVE MY LOVE WITH AN A

is a well-known game, but it must be kept up briskly; for if too much time be allowed the players for deliberation, the interest flags at once, and the sport becomes dull. "The very *defect* of the matter," as Launcelot Gobbo would say, lies in quickly finding epithets beginning with any given letter of the alphabet, such as A, B, or C, and the penalty for failure is a forfeit. The company sit round, and each has to love his or her love with a different letter. The first (we will say a lady) begins: "I love my love with an A, because he's amiable. I hate him with an A, because he's arrogant; he took me to the sign of the 'Artichoke,' and treated me to apples and ale." "I love my love with a B," continues the second, "because she's beautiful. I hate her with a B, because she's bounceable. I took her to the sign of the 'Brown Bear,' and treated her with bread and butter, and beer." "I love my love with a C," said a third, "because he's candid. I hate him with a C, because he's captious. He took me to the sign of 'Carthorse,' and treated me to curds and cream." And so the game goes on through all the letters of the alphabet, with the exception of poor X, for the very good reason that no English word begins with that unfortunate letter. Instead of going regularly round the circle, it is better that each player should have the power, after "loving his love," to call upon any one of the rest to continue the game. This gives an additional interest to the proceedings, from the unexpectedness of the summons.

CUPID'S COMING.

A letter must be taken, and the termination "ing." Say, for instance, that P is chosen. The first player says to the second, "Cupid's coming." "How is he coming?" says the second. "Playing," rejoins the first. The second then says to the third, "Cupid's coming." "How?" "Prancing;" and so the question and reply go round, through all the words beginning with P, and ending with ing—piping, pulling, pining, praising, preaching, etc. Those who cannot answer the question on the spur of the moment, pay a forfeit.

(To be continued.)

WORK IN CARDBOARD.

(Continued.)

THE following is another, and perhaps a simpler method of bringing about the same result. We commence, as before, by reducing our plan, or chart, to the required dimensions. Our next proceeding will be to cut the cardboard neatly and accurately, leaving the required margin as before. We now cut a square piece of colored paper, which, of course, must exceed the size of the cardboard by the width of the required margin. As the colored paper is intended to be folded around the edges,

FIG. 13.

allowance must be made for the thickness of the cardboard. The whole surface of the colored paper is now covered with a coating of paste, after which the cut cardboard is laid neatly in the centre. The corners of the colored paper are now cut, as shown in Fig. 7, and two opposite sides folded first. The remaining sides are now completed, and the chart itself mounted as before. This process, it will be seen, though simpler, requires more accuracy than that preceding it.

There is yet another and still simpler style of mounting—viz., paste a piece of colored paper of indefinite size on a similarly undefined piece of cardboard. Then cut your subject as required, and paste it exactly in the centre of the cardboard. After the whole thing is thoroughly dry, cut it to the proper size by using the knife and foot-rule. The colored margin, of course, must be previously measured off. This may be done by sliding a compass, opened to the required extent, up the sides of the cardboard (see the chart depicted in Fig. 9). The better method, however, is that we described at the commencement of this article (refer to Fig. 1)—that is, by means of a folded strip of paper.

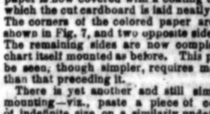

FIG. 14.

A chessboard may be constructed on the same principle. A square piece of glazed paper is cut to the required size, and mounted on a piece of cardboard, room being left for a broad margin, which should be black. This may be achieved by using black instead of colored paper. Otherwise, the process is the same as that already described. The square piece of glazed paper should be geometrically divided into the requisite number of squares, which squares should be indicated by means of a hard blacklead pencil. A number of black squares are now cut from black glazed paper, which should be as thin as possible, and these are mounted neatly on the actual chessboard. This is very pretty as well as a useful piece of work, and should be attempted by all boys.

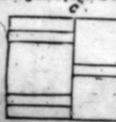

FIG. 15.

We will here append directions for the construction of a case suitable for *cartes de visite*, etc. Two pieces of cardboard are cut to the required shape, and further embellished by being edged with gold paper in the manner we have already described. They are next covered on one side with white moiré paper. These surfaces represent the *inside* of the case. The next thing to be done is to cut three broad strips of *satin paper*, and place them on the inside of one of the pieces of cardboard, as shown in A, Fig. 10. The remaining piece of careboard is then closed over the former in such a manner that the moiré paper faces the strips. The strips must not be disturbed in placing the two backs together, and the protruding ends must be pasted firmly down *a*, *B*, Fig. 10, pasted around the top part, and *b* around the back of the case. It will then be found that it may be readily opened as shown at *C*, Fig. 11. The *carties*, which, of course, must be thrust between the strips and the leather, will serve to keep the case closed. The strips need not necessarily be of paper, but may be cut from chamois leather, or other substance of similar nature.

REMINISCENCE OF LIVINGSTONE'S FATHER.

FROM the latest Canadian papers we learn that the Reverend Henry Wilkes, Professor of Theology in the Congregational College at Montreal, has just completed the fiftieth year of his ministry. In a sermon, in which he gave some interesting reminiscences of his ministerial career, he related the following anecdote, which cannot be overlooked by any future biographer of Doctor Livingstone. Hamilton is the town referred to in the extract:

"A shrewd, intelligent man was walking aimlessly in the street about ten o'clock, one Sunday morning, in a town some twelve miles from Glasgow. He was in much spiritual distress of soul, and knew not which way to turn. Being accosted by a friend, he was asked to attend service in the Independent Chapel, where a young man from America was to officiate that day. He complied, and the day's instruction was the means of his relief; he found rest in the Saviour, and in due time joined himself to the Church, bringing with him, of course, his young family. That was the family in which the renowned David Livingstone, the African missionary and explorer, was then a boy, for his father was the man who on that Sunday received the blessing. I did not learn those facts until more than twenty-five years afterward."

A CLEVER HOAX.

ONE of the cleverest hoaxes ever perpetrated was one invented by Swift, and intended for the public good. He caused to be printed and circulated some "last words" of a street-robber named Elliston, purporting to be written shortly before his execution, in which the condemned thief was made to say: "Now, as I am a dying man, I have done something which may be of good use to the public. I have left with an honest man—the only honest man I was ever acquainted with—the names of all my wicked brethren, the places of their abode, with a short account of the crimes they have committed, in many of which I have been their accomplice and heard the rest from their own mouths. I have likewise set down the names of those whom we call our setters of the wicked houses we frequent, and all of those who receive and buy our stolen goods. I have solemnly charged this honest man, and have received his promise upon oath, that whenever he hears of any rogue to be tried for robbery or house-breaking, he will look into his list, and if he finds the name there of the thief concerned to send the whole paper to the Government. Of this I here give my companions fair and public warning, and hope they will take it." We are told the Dean's ruse succeeded so well that street-robberies were, for many years after, few and far between.

A VERMONTER struck an embodied spirit on the nose, and the result was an outflow of real blood; so it appears that materialization involves the life fluid, and, perhaps all the nerves and tissues, just as if the spirit had come to stay. Another result was the lifelike remark by the spirit, "Ouch! Put out them lights;" and likewise the striking suggestion, "Perhaps you think because I'm a spirit it doesn't hurt, but it does."

CHRISTMAS DINNER PRIZE.

WE offer a prize of THREE DOLLARS to the young lady or young man among our readers who will send us the best account of what *she* or *he* would like for a Christmas dinner. All answers to be mailed on the 15th of January. Those answers which are very good, even if they do not get a prize, will be published in the BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY. Warn all your friends, and do not make the answers too long. One page of writing-paper for each answer is enough.

TO BE READ BY ALL OUR YOUNG FRIENDS.

WE are about to begin a new year, and in doing so we wish to inform you that we intend making the BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY more popular than ever.

In addition to the prizes that we are now giving for Drawing and Round Table, in a short time we intend to give prizes for the best pieces of poetry, then for the best little sketch written to fit a picture that we shall give you to describe, then for the best piece of mechanical work done by youthful hands, etc., etc.

We wish to encourage our young friends to employ their leisure hours by entering into an honorable rivalry with companions of their own age, and who knows but that by so doing we may unearth some budding genius, and help to advance a Stevenson or a Fulton? All articles receiving prizes will be illustrated, and the winner will, in addition to the prize, receive a certificate of merit.

We are going to give you some good, honest stories of adventures, hunting, daring escapes, etc., and have made arrangements to that effect with some of the best authors in the world.

We wish to see the BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY received in every household in the country, and we also wish every mother and father to confess that it contains only good, interesting and useful matter.

Of course we desire all our young friends to help us in this course, and with that idea we want them to circulate the BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY among their friends, show it to their parents, and get them to subscribe for the coming year.

At the present moment our Drawing Table and Round Table keep our hands full, but as soon as we are ready to give prizes for some new feature we shall warn you in time, so that you will all have an equal chance.

OUR LETTER-BOX.

FRED PURKIS.—1. Twenty-eight. 2. Under one hundred thousand. 3. $1.25. 4. You are greatly above the average, and bid fair to become a tall and powerful man.

P. A. G.—1. Is not published in monthly parts. 2. As far back as No. 623. 3. Is not published in monthly parts. 4. *Young American* stopped April 20th, 1876; *Boys of America* stopped June, 1877. 5. "Jack Harkaway Out West" is the only one we have in stock. Price thirty cents a copy.

D. L. BASSET.—1. No. 2. Sold out. 3. No. 4. In about a month's time. 5. Send to the Wilmer & Rogers' News Co., Beekman Street, New York city. 6. A letter to the authors will reach them, but we are not at liberty to disclose their names unless by their permission. 7. We cannot tell you exactly, but hope to in a short time. 8. Wilmer, Rogers & Co., we think, can oblige you. 9. There are about fifty published in England, and four or five in France. 10. About thirty days. 11. About five weeks.

C. J. B.—We expect a "Dick Lightheart" story in a few months. You can procure back numbers as far back as 623 only. The *Boys of America* is no longer published. Jack Manley does write for us now and then. We cannot yet tell you the title of his next story. We cannot give you the name of the author, but a letter addressed to him at our office will reach him.

THE DRAWING-TABLE.

THIRD COMPETITION.

PRIZE-WINNERS.

1.—E. Kennelly, Jr., 618 Filbert Street, San Francisco, Cal.

2.—Miss M. A. Logan, Charter Oak Lawn, St. Helena, Napa Co., Cal.

3.—C. Mauer (send address, or come to our office).

HONORABLE MENTION.

C. C. Northern, Nashville, Tenn.
Van Allen Johnson, Spring Valley, Rockland Co., N. Y.
H. M. Brownell, Box 313, Nyack, N. Y.
John Conway, 1137 Twenty-first Street, between L and M Streets, N. W. Washington, D. C.
Fred. W. Ryan, 123 Courtland Street, Louisville, Ky.
T. Backman, Baltimore, Md.
George A. Ingalls, 12 Pearl Street, Lynn, Mass.
Charles Tighe, 12 Spring Street, Charleston, S. C.
Alfred P. Sharp, 311 East Twenty-ninth Street, New York city.
J. Powell Spindle, 1529 Tenth Street, N. W. Washington, D. C.
Frank P. Brooks, Corry, Erie Co., Pa.
Frank Williamson, Bethlehem, Northampton Co., Pa.
Mabel E. Corey, Chelsea, Mass.
E. C. Large, 357 South First Street, Brooklyn, E. D.
Frank W. McKeever, 1209 Sixth Street, N. W. Washington, D. C.
Emil A. Pewenot, 533 Marion Street, Lancaster, Pa.
William H. Millimann, Jr., 324 West Fifty-first Street, New York city.
Frank McHaffie, Bradford, Ontario, Canada.
F. T. Hurlebaus, 217 Ninth Street, S. E. Washington, D. C.
Jesse Godley, Jr., 210 West Logan Square, Philadelphia, Pa.
A. Lipphard, 625 L Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.
Louis Gruetzmacher, Galveston, Texas.
John Green, 20 Russel's Court, Boston Highlands, Mass.
Charlie Bigelmann, 553 Main Street, Buffalo, N. Y.
Joseph Cook (send address).

The following candidates have been heard from, and their drawings will be decided upon next week:

Louis Gruetzmacher, A. B. Scott, Willie Swan, Charles Prior, Daniel R. Hogan, W. H. Calvin, Fred Ochley, John Conoway, Herman Guilachinsky, A. Manger, Frank McHaffie, John Kleile, Frank P. Newton, J. B. Orr, Henry Gatchell, Master Charles C. Judson, A. Keller, Eddie Coffin, William F. Stair, Frank Hickman, Joseph Cody, Charles Snyder, B. F. Bright, Jr., Charles Voelker, Charles Maurer, Otis J. Fall, Burt Rintz, Frank W. Harris, G. E. Grant, Robert Meeks, Adela C. Green, Louis Farrell, Thomas F. Byron, John L. Heffermann, P. M. Heitler, Fred S. Saffer, Louis S. Rea.

THE ROUND TABLE.

PRIZES.

To be Read by all who Send Answers.

FOR A COMPLETE SET OF ANSWERS TO ALL THE ENIGMAS, ETC., IN THIS NUMBER.

For the best and earliest, due allowance being made for the distance of each competitor	$5.00
For the next best	2.50
For the third in merit and promptness	1.00

N. B.—There is no prize offered for an answer to only one puzzle or riddle. The answers must be to ALL. Competitors in all parts of the country have an equal chance.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES, ETC., IN No. 686.

1. Win-try. 2. Strata-gem. 3. Fort-night. 4. Page, Ague, Gull, Eels. 5. Emma, Moan, Mast, Ants. 6. Spring, Winter—SnoW, Perl, ReversioN, InterpreT, NamE, GrammaR. 7. Risk, Isle, Sloe, Keep. 8. C, Sow, Sihew, Convert, Needy, Wry, T. 9. A button. 10. Stare, Tares, Rates, Tears, Star, Tars, Rats, Arts, Are, Era, Ear.

WINNERS OF PRIZES IN No. 686.

1.—J. H. Manning, Ypsilanti, Mich.

2.—James A. Kealy, 816 Shibly Street, Wilmington, Del.

3.—L. Chaffins, 263 South Street, Brooklyn, E. D.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1—TRANSPOSITION.

A KIND of spear is hidden here;
But if it is transposed,
A word for pure will, I am sure,
Be speedily disclosed.

2.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Foundation Words.

My primals, and my finals, too,
Will bring a quadruped to view,

Cross Words.

Down in mines beneath the ground
Is this ductile metal found.

A little girl went to a shop
To buy my next to eat,
And into it her teeth did pop
Because 'twas nice and sweet.

A quadruped put down for third;
Of it, no doubt, you will have heard.

My last I saw upon the cheek
Of a beggar in the street;
Her clothes were ragged, her head was bare,
And shoeless were her feet.

3—CHARADE.

O'erhead at night my first you'll see;
A kind of sea-fish next will be;
Now, if aright you join the two,
A talking-bird will come in view.

4.—LOGOGRIPH.

My whole it means to frighten;
Curtail, it is a wound;
Behead, and it will carry you
O'er many a mile of ground.

5.—REVERSION.

I'm a verb that means to be possible,
I'm part of each year as well;
I'm also a female Christian name;
My name, I've no doubt, you can tell.

It now reverse, and then (how strange!)
You will behold a wondrous change.

I'm a large esculent tuber or root,
Which, doubtless, you all will have seen,
For in kitchen gardens I may be found,
For I've grown very popular, I ween.

6.—DECAPITATION.

If you a border will behead,
A place for pastime comes instead;
Again behead, and you will find
A thing that shows another's mind.

7.—DECAPITATION.

A great foreign province
In whole you will trace;
Behead, and a country
Will come in its place.

8—ENIGMA.

I'm a quadruped female, and few are my match,
When 'tis something to nibble or something to scratch;
There are none but the females who go by my name,
Though a much larger animal's called by the same.

POSTAGE-STAMP collecting is one of the most instructive and entertaining amusements of the present day, and is very popular among all classes of people. Quite an extensive business is now done in importing foreign stamps for sale to collectors, and one of the most reliable persons engaged in this traffic is Mr. Arthur Fountain, of New York city.

FRANK LESLIE'S ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER *commends itself to youthful readers, as it is a faithful weekly record—a pictorial history, in fact, of the most important events occurring at home and abroad—political, social, commercial, scientific, etc., etc. It blends instruction with entertainment; and being profusely illustrated, the events are thus pleasantly impressed on the mind, and a rich and constantly increasing fund of useful knowledge afforded. Ask your parents to subscribe for the* ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER, *you will not fail to be interested in its contents. Published every Wednesday, price 10 cents; annual subscription, $4, postpaid. Frank Leslie's Publishing House, 53, 55 and 57 Park Place, New York.*

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Xmas Wonder-Box.

A wonderful treat for children. It affords them many days of profitable amusement in cutting out Soldiers, Dolls, &c.

IT CONTAINS:

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6 Dolls' Heads, 5c.
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1 Birthday Card, 5c.
30 to 50 Kindergarten Pictures, 10c.
40 Paper Flakes, 10c.
3 Comic Cards, 6c.
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60 Queen Anne and Photo. Cards, illuminated and perfumed, in case, 10c. GLOBE PRINT CO., Northford, Ct.

FREE! Before You Subscribe for any Literary paper or magazine for 1880, send for a specimen copy of The Fireside at Home, a mammoth 8-page, 40-column Illustrated Literary and Family Journal—the best and cheapest published. Only 50 cents per year, with choice of sixteen valuable premiums, free to every subscriber. Specimen copy free! Address, F. H. LUPTON, Publisher, 27 Park Place, New York.

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$66 a week in your own town. Terms and $5 outfit free. Address, H. HALLET & Co., Portland, Me.

$777 A YEAR and expenses to agents. Outfit free. Address, P. O. VICKERY, Augusta, Maine.

THE SUN FOR 1880

THE SUN will deal with the events of the year 1880 in its own fashion, now pretty well understood by everybody. From January 1st until December 31st it will be conducted as a newspaper, written in the English language, and printed for the people.

As a newspaper, THE SUN believes in getting all the news of the world promptly, and presenting it in the most intelligible shape—the shape that will enable its readers to keep well abreast of the age with the least unproductive expenditure of time. The greatest interest to the greatest number—that is the law controlling its daily make-up. It now has a circulation very much larger than that of any other American newspaper, and enjoys an income which it is at all times prepared to spend liberally for the benefit of its readers. People of all conditions of life and all ways of thinking buy and read THE SUN; and they all derive satisfaction of some sort from its columns, for they keep on buying and reading it.

In its comments on men and affairs, THE SUN believes that the only guide of policy should be common sense, inspired by genuine American principles and backed by honesty of purpose. For this reason it is, and will continue to be, absolutely independent of party, class, clique, organization, or interest. It is for all, but of none. It will continue to praise what is good and reprobate what is evil, taking care that its language is to the point and plain, beyond the possibility of being misunderstood. It is uninfluenced by motives that do not appear on the surface; it has no opinions to sell, save those which may be had by any purchaser for two cents. It hates injustice and rascality even more than it hates unnecessary words. It abhors frauds, pities fools, and deplores nincompoops of every species. It will continue throughout the year 1880 to chastise the first class, instruct the second, and discountenance the third. All honest men, with honest convictions, whether sound or mistaken, are its friends. And THE SUN makes no bones of telling the truth to its friends and about its friends whenever occasion arises for plain speaking.

These are the principles upon which THE SUN will be conducted during the year to come.

The year 1880 will be one in which no patriotic American can afford to close his eyes to public affairs. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the political events which it has in store, or the necessity of resolute vigilance on the part of every citizen who desires to preserve the Government that the founders gave us. The debates and Acts of Congress, the utterances of the press, the exciting contests of the Republican and Democratic parties, now nearly equal in strength throughout the country, the varying drift of public sentiment, will all bear directly and effectively upon the twenty-fourth Presidential election, to be held in November. Four years ago next November, the will of the nation, as expressed at the polls, was thwarted by an abominable conspiracy, the promoters and beneficiaries of which still hold the offices they stole. Will the crime of 1876 be repeated in 1880? The past decade of years opened with a corrupt, extravagant and insolent Administration intrenched at Washington. THE SUN did something towards dislodging the gang and breaking its power. The same men are now intriguing to restore their leader and themselves to places from which they were driven by the indignation of the people. Will they succeed? The coming year will bring the answers to these momentous questions. THE SUN will be on hand to chronicle the facts as they are developed, and to exhibit them clearly and fearlessly in their relations to expediency and right.

Thus, with a habit of philosophical good humor in looking at the minor affairs of life, and in great things a steadfast purpose to maintain the rights of the people and the principles of the Constitution against all aggressors, THE SUN is prepared to write a truthful, instructive, and at the same time entertaining history of 1880.

Our rates of subscription remain unchanged. For the DAILY SUN, a four-page sheet of twenty-eight columns, the price by mail, postpaid, is 55 cents a month, or $6.50 a year; or, including the Sunday paper, an eight-page sheet of fifty-six columns, the price is 65 cents a month, or $7.70 a year, postage paid.

The Sunday edition of THE SUN is also furnished separately at $1.20 a year, postage paid.

The price of the WEEKLY SUN, eight pages, fifty-six columns, is $1 a year, postage paid. For clubs of ten sending $10 we will send an extra copy free.

Address,

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Publisher of THE SUN, New York City.

NEW TRICKS! Send your address to the Standard Game Co., 657 Erie Street, Toledo, Ohio.

GIRLS! BOYS! 5,000 new, gilt workboxes and 60 bird patterns sent free for 30c. (silver). Dr. Way's Hair Curling Comb, price 40c. Edson's pat. glass watches, runs for 3 days, price 75c. Dr. Way's glass magic lantern and 13 views, price 35c. (no stamps taken). R. J. Parker & Co., Charleston, S. C.

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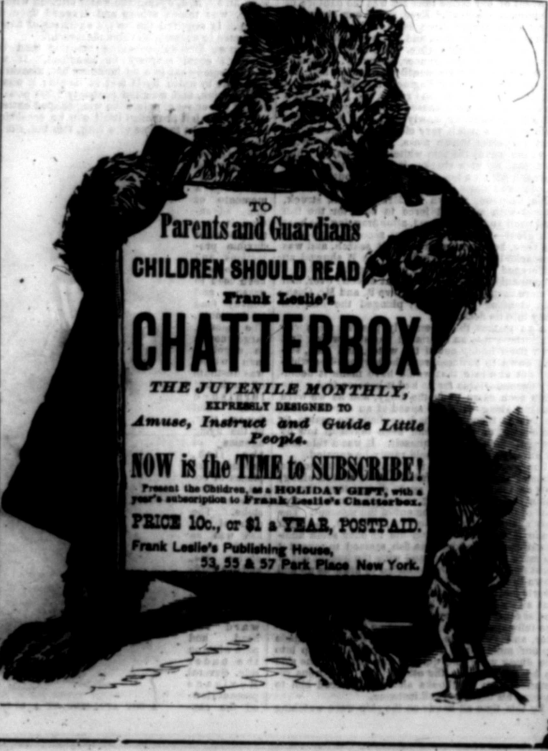

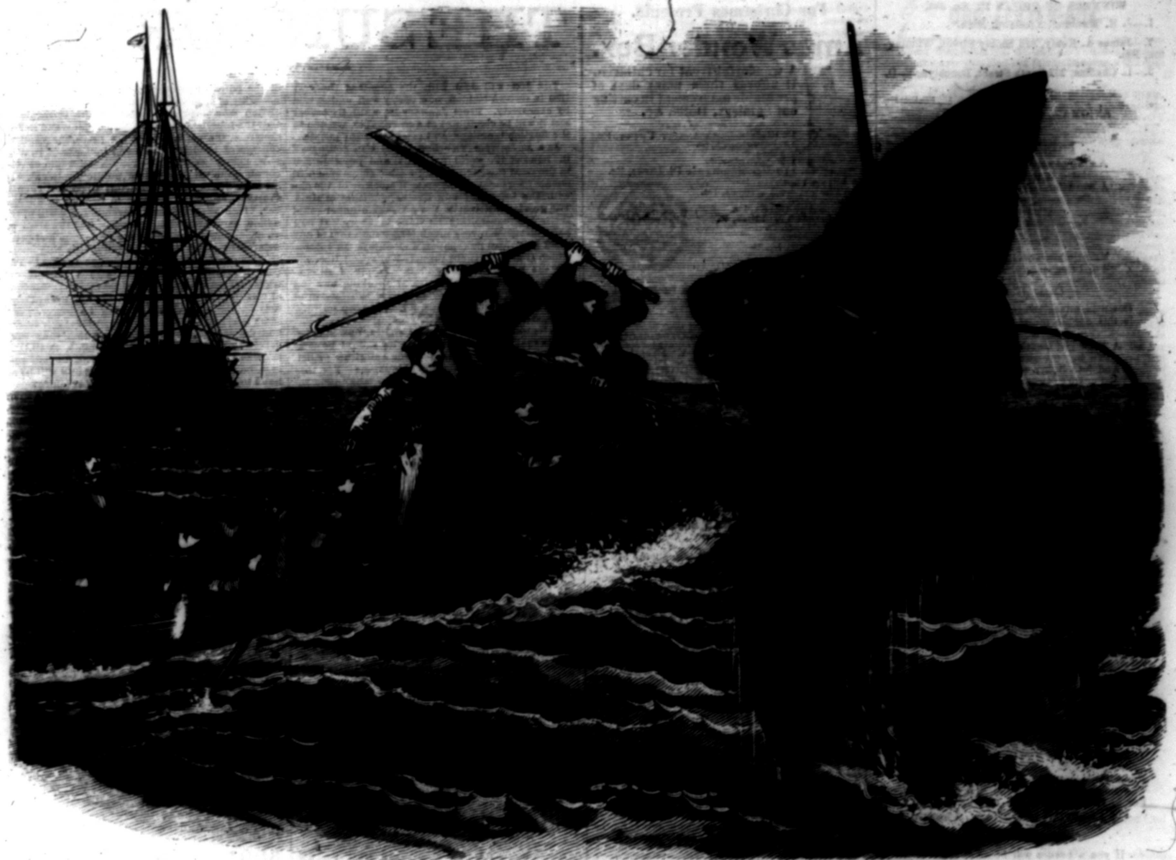

CAPTURING A SEA-MONSTER.—DESPERATE ENCOUNTER WITH A GIANT RAY-FISH, OR SEA-DEVIL, OFF THE COAST OF CALIFORNIA.

CAPTURING A SEA MONSTER.

AN officer of the flagship *Pensacola*, of the Pacific squadron, writing from off La Paz, Lower California, communicates an interesting account of the pursuit and capture of an enormous sea monster called the Giant Ray, and popularly known as the sea-devil. The writer says: The most exciting event of our cruise thus far was the capture of an immense sea-devil. Ever since our arrival in these waters, several huge fish have been observed in the vicinity of the ship, and much speculation has arisen as to what they were. One making his appearance near us, our gunner, George F. Cushman, decided to establish his identity if possible, and, accompanied by Assistant Engineer Edwards, Midshipmen McDonald, Wood, and Craven, and Paymaster's Clerk Spaulding, gave chase in the dingy.

The fish, swimming slowly, and near the surface of the water, which is very clear here, looked like a great shapeless brown mass, frequently throwing above the waves the thin white tips of its sides like the dorsal fin of a shark. It allowed the boat to approach within a few yards of it without showing symptoms of alarm, when it suddenly sounded.

The harpoon, thrown by Mr. Cushman, struck, but not with sufficient force to hold, for the fish freed itself and disappeared, after dragging the boat with great velocity for several seconds. Another was seen, however, after a short search, and was approached more successfully. As it showed an indifference to our presence equally great to that of its companion, we pulled the boat directly over, and no more than a foot or two above it, and Mr. Cushman, standing in the bow, plunged the harpoon firmly into its flesh.

In an instant that seemingly passive mass was transformed into an infuriated monster, which first threw itself bodily out of the water, and then, settling down to business, sent the harpoon-line whizzing out at a rate that would have made it decidedly uncomfortable for us had it become foul. The strain soon came upon the dingy, and as we were whisked along with the speed of an express-train we felt as though we had applied the match to some mine, or that we had been taken in tow by the gentleman in black himself. It was a ride that for novelty and speed could rarely be equaled.

Imagine our situation, in a light boat with such a monster attached to it, which, as it rushed along, now on the surface and again diving deep, threatening to upset us among the sharks, and you can realize the intense excitement of the moment. The only available thing in the boat, a bucket, had been made fast to the harpoon-line to offer some additional resistance, but the fish seemed to regard it no more than a feather, and with the bucket out of sight under the water, continued to draw us up and down the bay at full speed. During all this time its efforts had been confined to an attempt to escape, but as its load grew heavy it became belligerent, and several times turned upon the boat, exhibiting the full capacity of a mouth some two feet in diameter, and lashing the boat with its sides. We made up our minds that if the fish decided to jump into the dingy we would quietly slip out over one side as he appeared at the other. But a vigorous resistance from boathooks and oars induced him to resume his flight in each instance.

By this time all hands on the ship were watching the struggle, and the whaleboat was sent to our assistance, but, for fully an hour, both boats, lashed together, were towed without signs of exhaustion from the fish, the thrusts of boarding-pikes seeming only to accelerate its speed.

Finally, its immense exertions told upon it, and it came to the surface directly between the two boats, where it was placed *hors du combat* by blows from an ax, and, dyeing the water crimson with its blood, was towed ashore and dragged upon the beach. It required the united exertions of nearly forty men to accomplish this undertaking.

A more formidable-looking monster than this sea-devil could scarcely be imagined. It was shaped somewhat like an immense bat, measuring 15½ feet in width by 11 feet in length; it was 29 inches thick, and weighed probably 2,000 pounds. It had but one fin, unless the wing-shaped extremities by which it propelled itself can be considered such, or that at the base of a long, thin tail, similar in appearance to a riding-whip, and which is preserved as a memento of the adventure. Its eyes are placed in flexible projections, and seem to have been used to grasp and convey food to its mouth. The mouth, large enough to engulf a man whole, was destitute of teeth, but furnished with solid bones, that, in the dying agonies of the fish, ground large pieces of coral as a stone crusher does stone. The skin of the fish was as rough as a coarse file, and of a dark-grayish hue on the back, with white patches toward the head, and pure white on the under side. Several Mexicans present viewed the capture with great satisfaction, as they affirm that this creature is one of the most dreaded enemies of the pearl-diver.

DANIEL WEBSTER'S FIRST PLEA—A SQUIRREL CASE.

WHEN Daniel Webster and his brother Ezekiel were boys on their father's farm in New Hampshire, they were greatly annoyed one year by the ravages of squirrels, and traps were set to catch them. Ezekiel brought the first capture to the house in triumph, and boylike, eager to kill him at once, as a punishment for his misdeeds, or to make him a prisoner for life in a cage; but Daniel would consent to neither sentence—he wanted to set the poor frightened little creature free. The dispute waxed warm, and the boys appealed to their father. He proposed to hold a court, and have the squirrel tried, Ezekiel appearing for the prosecution, Daniel for the defense.

This was a grand idea. The court was organized in the family sitting-room, with the father on the bench. Ezekiel did his very best. He enlarged upon the iniquities of the squirrel and the necessity for punishment, and supposed he had covered the whole ground. But Daniel rose, his young face lighted with enthusiasm, and his young heart full of pity for the helpless animal whose life he was to plead for. Boy, as he was, he poured out such a flood of eloquent speech on the beauty and worth of life even to a squirrel, on the great wrong of imprisonment for an unconscious offense, and on the charm of freedom, that when he sat down his hearers wiped the tears from their eyes. The prosecutor was the first to deliver the bright-eyed little prisoner, and Daniel and Ezekiel set no more traps. Daniel became one of the leading American statesmen.

A BOY ATTACKED BY A BLACK SNAKE AND RESCUED BY HIS FATHER.

IN THE COILS OF A BLACK SNAKE.

A SHORT time ago, Mr. George Cornell, who lives at Snake Hill, near the city of Newburg, N. Y., went walking over his farm, accompanied by a five-year-old son. Mr. Cornell had got some distance ahead of the child, and suddenly he heard him scream. Mr. Cornell ran back to the boy, and found that a large black-snake had coiled itself tightly around the little fellow's leg. It is supposed that the boy unconsciously stepped upon the snake, and that the reptile instantly wound itself as Mr. Cornell found him. The father battered the head of the snake with stones until he killed it. It measured four feet six inches in length.

A LITTLE BOY'S LAMENT.

THERE isn't any boo'ful grass
In these hot, stony streets;
There are no singing birds, or bees,
Or roses full of sweets.

There's not a daisy, not a one—
You know, those star-like things
On which the butterflies sit down
To rest their legs and wings;

And, worse than all, there's not a speck
Of any place to dig—
I'll never live in such a place,
I'm sure, when I am big.

I wish you'd send me by the train
Straight back to Grandpa Gray;
There's so much room upon his farm
For me to run and play.

There I could dig, and dig, and dig,
And wouldn't start you so
By jumping in the house. Oh, do,
Dear mamma, let me go!

For I'd *lief-ser* be a cat,
Like Thomas, or a pig,
Than be a little boy, and have
No place where I can dig.

QUID PRO QUO.—Talleyrand, the Prime Minister of Napoleon, was disliked by Madame de Staël. It so happened that Talleyrand was lame and madame cross-eyed. Meeting one day, madame said, "Monsieur, how is that poor leg?" Talleyrand quickly replied, "Crooked, as you see."

CRIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES.—Man judges the crime, but God knows the circumstances.